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The Gig Harbor library will be the local “words and pictures” headquarters this fall where children can make art in the style of three famous artists and grownups can enjoy the words of three popular Northwest poets.

Starting Oct. 9 and continuing monthly through December, the library’s Kids Discover Art program will teach youngsters about the lives of Frida Kahlo, Diego Rivera and Wassily Kadinsky.

“We’ll learn about the life and the art of each artist, and then the kids will get to make their own paintings in that artist’s style,” said Tamara Saarinen, youth librarian at the Gig Harbor branch.

The program is based on a series of books written by MaryAnn Kohl titled “Discovering Great Artists: Hands-on Art for Children in the Styles of the Great Masters” and is suitable for children ages 6-10, Saarinen said.

“We use MaryAnn’s books as the basis for our activities, but we also search the Internet or come up with a few on our own,” she added. “We choose the artists according to which biographies we have in our collection.”

Each session begins with a librarian reading one or two short stories about the artist, and then the children get to play with paints to make their own artworks.

“My main motivation for doing this was sharing our collection of gorgeous, children’s picture books about great artists,” Saarinen said.
“I didn’t really learn about the great artists until I took French in high school and my teacher spent a week teaching us about the Louvre and the Impressionists.

“I wanted to share my love of art and books and these programs are the perfect format for it,” she said.

Kids Discover Art sessions will take place 4 to 5 p.m., Oct. 9, Nov. 13 and Dec. 11. The programs are free and all supplies are provided, but registration is required.

The library’s annual Fall Poetry Series takes place three consecutive Thursday evenings starting Oct. 23 with Robert Michael Pyle, followed by Rachel Dilworth on Oct. 30 and Tim McNulty on Nov. 6.

If there’s a theme to this year’s series, it’s probably the natural world, said Doug Murphy, a Friends of the Library member who organizes the poetry series.

“I think natural history is very enriching,” he said. “It’s easy in Western Washington to look around and see the beautiful green curtain that’s all around us.”

Pyle, from Grays River, Washington, is perhaps best known for his studies of butterflies. He’s a full-time biologist, writer, teacher and speaker and has written 18 books and countless articles — and also poems. He’ll read from his latest work, “Evolution of the Genus Iris: Poems.”

Gig Harbor resident Rachael Dilworth won the Akron Poetry Prize for her first book of poetry, “The Wild Rose Asylum: Poems of the Magdalen Laundries of Ireland.” According to goodreads.com, Dilworth’s poems “navigate individual and collective voices and silences ... with grace and unflinching attention.”

Tim McNulty is a poet, essayist and nature writer, “and, like Bob Pyle, he’s a world-class naturalist,” Murphy said. “One of his books is a natural history of Olympic National Park. It’s dense and long, but you can tell it’s written by a poet.” McNulty lives with his family in the foothills of the Olympics and is active in wilderness and conservation work.

Murphy uses several criteria when he selects the poets for each year’s series.
“One of my missions is to support local poets,” he said. “They also need to have a fairly new book out, and they need to have at least 50 minutes of material that they can read from.

“I’m not well-read enough to read every single poet, and I don’t claim to have a great depth of knowledge of them, but I always have a wish list of poets I’d like to bring to Gig Harbor.”

He thinks that people often stay away from poetry readings because they “don’t think they understand poetry.

“But I think it’s a wonderful way to learn to appreciate it and to learn directly from the poets themselves where their poems come from.”

And besides, he said, “there are so many lyrical things written about our area that it’s truly a joy” to listen to them.

Both the Kids Discover Art program and the poetry series are sponsored by the Friends of the Gig Harbor Library.

For information, call the library at (253) 548-3305.
WANT TO GO?

Kids Discover Art takes place Thursdays, Oct. 9 (Frida Kahlo), Nov. 13 (Diego Rivera) and Dec. 11 (Wassily Kadinsky). All programs are from 4 to 5 p.m.
Registration is required.

The Fall Poetry Series takes place three consecutive Thursdays: Oct. 23 (Robert Michael Pyle), Oct. 30 (Rachel Dilworth) and Nov. 6 (Tim McNulty). Readings start at 7 p.m.

The art program and poetry readings are free and are sponsored by Friends of the Library.

The library is located at 4424 Point Fosdick Drive, NW. Call 253-548-3305 for information.
UNITED WAY OF PIERCE COUNTY’S

LIL READERS

‘LIL’ Readers volunteer at small and in-home child care centers to help with story time and activities every other week.

Orientation and Training*:
Thursday, October 30th
9:30am-12:30pm
Sumner Library, 1116 Fryar Ave.

*Training provided by Pierce County Library. Find out about opportunities in Buckley and Lakewood.

Become a ‘LIL’ Reader and help ensure a strong start for our children!
Parkland/Spanaway Library closed Oct. 13-26 for improvements

October 6, 2014 by Linda Farmer — Leave a Comment

Parkland/Spanaway Pierce County Library will be closed Oct. 13-26 for improvements. During this time, the library’s meeting room will be open limited hours so people can pick up books and other materials they have placed on hold. The exterior book drop will be available for customers to return items they have checked out. Some computer access also will be available (6 stations, 30 minutes per person per day). Restrooms will not be available.

Hours during the closure are:

- Monday–Thursday, 10 a.m.–7 p.m.
- Friday, 10 a.m.–6 p.m.
- Saturday, 10 a.m.–5 p.m.
- Sunday, 1–5 p.m.
During the closure, customers may change their holds pickup location to another library such as Summit Library, 5107 112th St. E., South Hill Library, 15420 Meridian E., Graham Library, 9202 224th St. E. or Lakewood Library, 6300 Wildaire Road S.W.

Parkland/Spanaway Library is located at 13718 Pacific Ave. S.
Dazed by devices? Guessing which gizmo to give as a gift? Get hands-on experience with trendy tech, including tablets and e-readers, during free technology petting zoos at Pierce County Library.

Tuesday, Oct. 21, 2-4 p.m. Lakewood Pierce County Library, 6300 Wildaire Road S.W. 98499

Saturday, Oct. 25, 12-4 p.m. South Hill Pierce County Library, 15420 Meridian E. 98375

Drop in to find answers to questions about Windows, Android and Apple. Explore the library’s digital services, including free downloadable books, movies, songs, magazines and more. And enter for a chance to win a $25 Best Buy gift card.

These free events are made possible by a partnership with Pierce County Library System and Best Buy.
More options for Pierce County Library book listeners

OCTOBER 7, 2014 BY LINDA FARMER — LEAVE A COMMENT

Pierce County Library book listeners now have more choices. This month the library expanded its contract with Hoopla, a digital media service, to include more than 11,000 audiobook titles. Customers can already download or stream music, movies and TV shows through Hoopla. The library also is increasing the checkout limits for customers from 8 to 12 within the Hoopla service.

Learn more about Pierce County Library’s other digital offerings including e-books and magazines. Download or stream to your electronic device of choice. All free with your Pierce County Library Card. Questions? Email the library’s help desk or call 253-548-3600.

Please share:

FILED UNDER: GOVERNMENT, PIERCE COUNTY
Photographing the Pacific Northwest at U.P. Library

OCTOBER 12, 2014 BY THE SUBURBAN TIMES — LEAVE A COMMENT

Meet author and photographer Alan Bauer (Thursday, October 16 – 7 pm at the U.P. Library), who specializes in Pacific Northwest natural and local history. His work has appeared in hiking guidebooks, magazines and other publications. Books will be available for purchase and signing. Free events sponsored by Friends of the Libraries.

Please share:

Care to comment?

FILED UNDER: UNIVERSITY PLACE
News & Events

MLIS alumna appointed PCLS executive director

Wednesday, August 27, 2014

Georgia Lomax is the new Pierce County Library System executive director. She serves on the University of Washington Information School Advisory Board for the Master of Library and Information Science (MLIS) program. Lomax graduated with her MLIS in 1984 and received the school’s Distinguished Alumni Award in 2006.

Lomax has served as the library’s deputy director since 2006. Lomax, 55, starts on Nov. 10, 2014. Neel Parikh, the library’s current executive director, retires Nov. 1, after 20 years at the helm.

Prior to joining Pierce County, Lomax worked for the King County Library System from 1993 to 2005 serving in a number of positions including cluster manager and managing librarian. Before that, she served as director of the Flathead County Library System in Montana from 1987 to 1992, and as the director of the Miles City Public Library and the Sagebrush Federation of Libraries from 1985 to 1987. In addition to her MLIS degree from the iSchool, she earned her bachelor’s degree in communications and journalism from Washington State University.

Lomax sits on the executive board of Tacoma Community House and serves on the University of Washington iSchool Advisory Board. Nationally, she sits on the Public Library Association (PLA) Board of Directors and served as this year’s national conference program committee chair. She was named a “Mover and Shaker” by the Library Journal in 2010 and also won the Allie Beth Martin Award from PLA in 2006.

A Des Moines, Wash., native, Lomax is a 1977 graduate of Mt. Rainier High School in the Highline School District. Now a Sumner resident, Lomax is an avid sailor. She races regularly in Seattle aboard the 46-foot sailboat New Haven. In July, she and her New Haven teammates took third overall in the 2014 Vic-Maui race.

Lomax is the fourth director in Pierce County Library’s 68-year history. With faster Internet connections, more mobile devices and the rise of entertainment giants such as Amazon and Netflix, public libraries find themselves at a crossroads. Lomax’s goals for keeping Pierce County Library relevant include focusing on tech innovation, workforce development and finding ways to further support the military population. She also has a personal interest in further connecting the library with the Native American community.

“As libraries exit the recession, they can look back and try to rebuild what was, or they can look forward and ask what they must now become,” said Lomax. “We choose to move forward. We will determine our future using guidance from the community and the resources and creativity of our staff. I know for sure that includes providing much-needed services, great books for readers, and the library playing a major role in the community.”
About Pierce County Library System
Established in 1946, Pierce County Library System includes unincorporated Pierce County and 15 annexed cities and towns. Pierce County Library serves more than 564,000 people through 18 branches as well as online services. The system is the fourth largest in the state and lends more than 7.5 million items each year. The library is an independent taxing district reporting to a Board of Trustees. Local taxpayers fund 96 percent of the library’s revenues through property taxes. In 2013, Pierce County Library earned the coveted National Medal for Museum and Library Service award.

Tags:
- iSchool alumnna appointed PCLS executive director
The Pierce County Library System Presents DIY Fest!

OCTOBER 16, 2014 BY ADMIN LEAVE A COMMENT

The Pierce County Library System just keeps on hosting great events for your family!

The latest is DIY fest, an event you’re going to love if you’re a gardener, crafter, do-it-yourselfer, or just wish you were!

Local authors and exhibitors will be there with information on gardening, farming, household sustainability, and handcrafts. And, yes, there will be plenty to interest your kiddos.

I’m honestly not crafty OR handy, but I’m obsessed with these shows on HGTV, and I’m definitely looking forward to checking out this event. I just have to make sure my husband doesn’t decide we need chickens and goats. Wish me luck!

DIY Fest will be at the Fruitland Grange (You know-near the Costco in Puyallup), and it’s FREE. It’s November 15th from 10AM-3. I’ll definitely remind you, but I knew some of you would want to put this fun event on your calendars now.

You can get more information about this event (There may still be exhibitor spaces) here!
Oh, and if you're feeling inspired, don't forget that you can find tons of great books on all kinds of DIY topics at your library! And if you need to get a card, their great contest for new card holders is running through the end of the month!

This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Pierce County Library is a 2013 winner of the National Medal for Museum and Library Service.

Disclosure: This is a sponsored post. Opinions are entirely my own! I LOVE it when you mention Sounds Fun Mom at events and businesses you visit. Thanks!
If you’ve been reading a while, you already know that our library cards are treasured possessions around here.

We’ve been making regular library trips since the boys were babies, and we still all get a thrill out of checking out a stack of new books just waiting to be devoured.

Of course, we also love the free programming at the library, the downloadable ebooks, the movies, the music, and all the treasures we find there.

The Pierce County Library System is one of the country’s finest (It’s an award winning system—it’s not just me talking here)!

If you’ve moved here recently, or you’ve just never gotten around to checking your Pierce County Library branch out, you need to put it at the top of your to-do list. It’s truly the best, FREE way I know to keep your whole family learning and having fun.

What’s more, when you get a card this month, you’ll be entered to win an iPad mini!

Yep—it’s the library’s eighth annual card drive, and when you get your new, FREE card, you’ll be entered to win an iPad mini from the Pierce County Library Foundation.
Already have a library card? Sign up a friend and you’ll both be entered to win. Military personnel and families may enter the drawing by showing their military ID. Or, consider getting your kids their own cards! This was a special milestone for our boys when they were able to neatly print their first and last names. It was a big incentive for Henry, and seriously such a special moment when he picked out his own card.

Somehow the library fines are still all on me, but that’s a subject for another day……

You can get a card in person or online. They’re free, and if you’re a reader pretty much anywhere in Pierce County, Puyallup, Roy, or Tacoma, you’re eligible!

Everything else you need to know about Pierce County Library cards is right here.

Disclosure: We are super proud to be sponsored by the Pierce County Library System. As always, the opinions are all my own.

**Avery WePrint™**

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- -
The Pierce County Library is hosting their first ever **DIY Fest on November 15** from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. This is a great chance to learn from exhibitors about gardening, farming, household sustainability, handicrafts, and things to keep young DIY-ers interested. This is a FREE event.

This event will feature local authors, hands-on activities, kitchen demos, food trucks and of course a DIY Bookmobile! This will take place at Fruitland Grange in Puyallup, Washington. You can read more about it here.

**Participating local authors are:**
- **Blair Stocker** – “Wise Craft” 10:30 a.m.
- **Dee Williams** – “The Big Tiny” 11:30 a.m.
- **Jennie Grant** – “City Goats” 12:30 p.m.
- **Lisa Taylor** – “Your Farm in the City” 1:30 p.m.

This project was made possible in part by the [Institute of Museum and Library Services](http://www.imls.gov). Pierce County Library is a 2013 winner of the National Medal for Museum and Library Service.

**Sponsored Post:** This post is sponsored by the Pierce County Library System. This means I'm being compensated to share this incredible program with you. All content and opinions are my own.
Pierce County Library will be hosting their first ever DIY Fest at the Fruitland Grange in Puyallup on Saturday November 15, 2014. This will be an event for anyone interested in DIY around the home, with topics such as gardening, farming, household sustainability, crafts, and much more.

They will have a number of exhibitors who will have displays of their DIY projects, as well as demos and hands-on activities, so you can try it out yourself. What a fun idea & a great way to get some inspiration for any projects you are wanting to start yourself!

**DIY Fest Details:**

**Location:** Fruitland Grange; Puyallup  
**Date:** Saturday November 15th  
**Time:** 10am – 3pm  
**Price:** FREE

**Features of the DIY Fest:**

- Local authors  
- Hands-on activities  
- Kitchen demos  
- Food trucks  
- Your DIY Bookmobile
Here are the local authors who will be speaking:

10:30 a.m. Blair Stocker – “Wise Craft”

11:30 a.m. Dee Williams – “The Big Tiny”

12:30 p.m. Jennie Grant – “City Goats”

1:30 p.m. Lisa Taylor – “Your Farm in the City”

Become an Exhibitor:

They are still accepting exhibitors for this event as well if you’d like to exhibit your DIY projects. Participation as an exhibitor is totally free & you can pass out business cards/flyers from your table, as well as offer giveaways (you just can’t sell anything at the event). Preference will be given to exhibitors who offer hands-on activities for people to try out. So, if this is something you’re interested in & you have a DIY hobby you’d like to share, this would be a great way to be able to share it with people. Head on over to the DIY Fest website to find out more details & register for the event.

This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Pierce County Library is a 2013 winner of the National Medal for Museum and Library Service. This project was made possible in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Pierce County Library is a 2013 winner of the National Medal for Museum and Library Service.

Disclosure: This is a sponsored post. All opinions are 100% mine. See our disclosure policy for more details.
South Hill Library to enhance experience for adult readers

By Andrew Fickes | Puyallup Herald

Staff writer October 28, 2014

There is good news afoot for adult readers at the Pierce County Library South Hill branch.

By early March, a new reading lounge area will be featured, complete with relaxing furniture and charging stations for laptop and tablet browsing.

“We’re taking the adult reading area and magazine area and restructuring it for adults,” said Sally Porter Smith, the library system’s customer experience director. “They can read books and plug in their tablet or laptop while their kids are doing homework.”

Smith said the South Hill Library is the fourth busiest library in Washington state. Within the Pierce County Library System, the South Hill branch boasts the highest adult readership.

“In 2013, we checked out 906,000 items,” Smith said. “We have over 31,000 active (library) card holders in South Hill.”

Smith said South Hill is a community of really busy families.
“We want the library to be as convenient and as responsive as possible,” Smith explained. “We want to make it easy and convenient for them and to provide them a comfortable place for them to read.”

A sizable and generous financial gift from an anonymous donor to the Pierce County Library Foundation has now put the library in a good position to add additional furniture and features beyond the original scope of the project.

The anonymous donor asked that the reading lounge be made in honor of Florence Davis, a longtime supporter of the Friends of the South Hill Library. She passed away Sept. 20.

A fundraising campaign that started last spring to help support adult reading enhancements beyond the library’s budget is also $20,000 away from its $150,000 goal.

From Nov. 1-30, the South Hill library will be closed to make time for enhancements to the public restrooms and to replace the building’s worn carpet. During this time patrons will have access to the bookmobile in order to check out and return books. There will also be some computer access. Bookmobile service hours are from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday; 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday; and 1 to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Smith said in addition to the reading lounge, new adult books will be moved to the front of the library close to the lobby for easy self-checkout.

Creation of a large print book section will be made available for adult readers, complete with bench-type seating for easy browsing.

“This makes it much more accessible to them,” Smith added.

Visitors should not expect changes and additions to be made by the end of November; most additions and updates to the reading lounge and other areas will be completed by the end of February into early March.

More information

To Help Out

Patrons of the South Hill Library can make a financial contribution to the project by visiting piercecountylibrary.org/donate and selecting South Hill Library from the dropdown menu. Donations can also be made by a check to PCLF — with South Hill on the memo line — and sent to 3005 112th ST. E., Tacoma 98446.

Andrew Fickes: 253-503-1854 andrew.fickes@puyallupherald.com @herald_andrew
Pierce County Library Foundation Board elects officers

OCTOBER 2, 2014 BY LINDA FARMER — LEAVE A COMMENT

Pierce County Library Foundation Board recently elected new officers to direct the volunteer board’s support of library services for Pierce County Library System.

New officers for 2014-15 include:

- Michael Gordon, Tacoma, president
- Mary Ann Woodruff, University Place, vice president
- Molly Stuen, Gig Harbor, secretary
- Kari Kennard, University Place, treasurer
- Janice Ludwig, Lakewood, member-at-large
- Craig Richmond, Olalla, member-at-large

The Pierce County Library Foundation Board of Directors represent their community, advocate for literacy and advance philanthropy for programs and services of Pierce County Library System.
In the past year, individuals, businesses and organizations made charitable gifts resulting in revenues totaling $710,855. Pierce County Library Foundation current funding priorities focus on early learning and senior outreach. Early learning projects include STEM-related Block Play and Science-to-Go backpacks, STARS training for child care providers and Literacy Kits. Senior outreach programs provide service to residents in adult care facilities as well as large print books, audiobooks and e-books on e-readers. The Foundation’s 20-member volunteer Board of Directors raises and allocates charitable gifts to expand library services beyond tax-based funding and help enhance greatly needed services.
Get a Pierce County Library card, enter to win an iPad mini

SEPTEMBER 30, 2014 BY LINDA FARMER — LEAVE A COMMENT

During Pierce County Library System’s eighth annual library card drive—Oct. 1-31, 2014—get a free library card and enter to win an iPad mini, courtesy of the Pierce County Library Foundation. People who already have a library card can enter the drawing by signing up a friend. Military personnel and families may enter the drawing by showing their military ID.

How do I get a card?

Sign up for a card at one of 18 libraries during open hours or online at any time. The drawing must be entered at one of the library locations.

What can I do with the card?

With a Pierce County Library card people have access to free:

- Books and e-books
- Music and movies
Get a Pierce County Library card, enter to win an iPad mini

- Magazines and TV shows
- Museum passes
- School readiness
- Technology classes
- Events for all ages

Who can get a card?

People who live in or own property in unincorporated Pierce County, Bonney Lake, Buckley, DuPont, Eatonville, Edgewood, Fife, Gig Harbor, Lakewood, Milton, Orting, South Prairie, Steilacoom, Sumner, University Place, or Wilkeson; as well as people who live on a military base, tribal land or national park in the county. Through a borrowing agreement with Puyallup, Roy and Tacoma, residents in those cities may also get free cards.

About Pierce County Library System

Established in 1946, Pierce County Library System includes unincorporated Pierce County and 15 annexed cities and towns. Pierce County Library serves more than 564,000 people through 18 branches as well as online services. The system is the fourth largest in the state and lends more than 7.5 million items each year. The library is an independent taxing district reporting to a Board of Trustees. Local taxpayers fund 96 percent of the library’s revenues through property taxes. In 2013, Pierce County Library earned the coveted National Medal for Museum and Library Service award.

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FILED UNDER: PIERCE COUNTY

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http://thesubtimes.com/2014/09/30/sign-up-for-a-pierce-county-library-card-and-enter-to-... 10/7/2014
PIERCE COUNTY LIBRARY CHANGES DIGITAL MEDIA OFFERINGS

Pierce County Library is discontinuing two digital media services this month and expanding a third:

- Axis 360, an e-book service, was discontinued on Sept. 26.
- OneClickDigital, an e-book and audiobook service, was discontinued on Sept. 30.
- Hoopla, a multi-faceted digital media service, expanded to include audiobooks on Oct. 1.

Customers can immediately search for e-books and audiobooks in the library’s OverDrive catalog at http://www.piercecounty.lib.overdrive.com.

As of Oct. 1 the library has expanded its offerings in the Hoopla catalog to include audiobooks. Customers can already download or stream music, movies and TV shows through Hoopla. The library also is increasing the checkout limits for customers from 8 to 12 within the Hoopla service.

Pierce County Library regularly reviews its collection to keep up with advances in e-book technology and to keep pace with changing customer interests.

Learn more about Pierce County Library’s digital offerings including music, magazines, movies and TV shows as well as e-books audiobooks. Download or stream to your electronic device of choice. All free with your Pierce County Library Card.

Questions? Email the library’s help desk or call (253) 548-3600.
Pierce County Library changes digital media offerings

SEPTEMBER 29, 2014 BY LINDA FARMER — LEAVE A COMMENT

Pierce County Library is discontinuing two digital media services this month and expanding a third:

- Axis 360, an e-book service, was discontinued on Sept. 26, 2014.
- OneClickDigital, an e-book and audiobook service, will be discontinued on Sept. 30, 2014.
- Hoopla, a multi-faceted digital media service, will expand to include audiobooks on Oct. 1, 2014.

Customers can immediately search for e-books and audiobooks in the library’s OverDrive catalog.

Hoopla options expanded to include audiobooks

Starting Oct. 1, 2014, the library is expanding its offerings in the Hoopla catalog to include audiobooks. Customers can already download or stream music, movies and TV shows through Hoopla. The library also is increasing the checkout limits for customers from 8 to 12 within the Hoopla service.

Pierce County Library regularly reviews its collection to keep up with advances in e-book technology and to keep pace with changing customer interests.

**Want that on your device? Music, magazines, movies, TV shows, e-books and audiobooks**

Learn more about Pierce County Library’s digital offerings including music, magazines, movies and TV shows as well as e-books audiobooks. Download or stream to your electronic device of choice. All free with your Pierce County Library Card.

**Questions?**

Questions? Email the library’s help desk or call 253-548-3600.

**About Pierce County Library System**

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FILED UNDER: GOVERNMENT, PIERCE COUNTY

**Care to comment?**

Enter your comment here...
New digital experience director at Pierce County Library

SEPTEMBER 24, 2014 BY LINDA FARMER — LEAVE A COMMENT

Karim Adib joined Pierce County Library in August as the organization's digital experience director. Adib comes from Chicago Public Library where he worked for 10 years as the director of information and technology services.

About Pierce County Library System

Established in 1946, Pierce County Library System includes unincorporated Pierce County and 15 annexed cities and towns. Pierce County Library serves more than 564,000 people through 18 branches as well as online services. The system is the fourth largest in the state and lends more than 7.5 million items each year. The library is an independent taxing district reporting to a Board of Trustees. Local taxpayers fund 96 percent of the library's revenues through property taxes. In 2013, Pierce County Library earned the coveted National Medal for Museum and Library Service award.

Please share:
Free online homework help from Pierce County Library

SEPTEMBER 20, 2014 BY LINDA FARMER — LEAVE A COMMENT

Learners of all ages have access to free online homework help. The service is available in English and Spanish, and is open from 1-10 p.m. seven days a week. Log on at home or anywhere with your library card or at any of Pierce County Library's 18 locations.

Students work with expert tutors for live, on-demand help with math, science, English, social studies and other topics. Tutors and students communicate in real time by typing, drawing and marking up lessons/web content.

Writing lab and skills-building sessions

The service includes a 24-hour writing lab. Students can use a secure file-sharing feature to submit their papers to trained writing instructors at any time. In addition, the library's homework help service offers state-aligned skills-building lessons.

All tutors and instructors reside in the U.S., possess four-year college degrees, undergo a rigorous selection and training process and complete a full background and security check.
The Greater Bonney Lake Historical Society (GBLHS) is sponsoring the Milotte Wildlife Film Festival from 11:30 am to 4:30 pm on Saturday, October 18, 2014 at the Bonney Lake Justice Center (5002 Main Street East). This year GBLHS has partnered with the Pierce County Library System. The Milotte Wildlife Film Festival is an annual event held in Bonney Lake, Washington to recognize the works of Alfred and Elma Milotte. Through their films, books and speeches they educated young people around the world about nature. The festival is also dedicated to helping a new generation of filmmakers by providing audiences that encourages through a film contest and presenters that educates.

This year we are privilege to have a guest speaker Bill Wallauer from the Jane Goodall Institute. Jane Goodall has spent a lifetime making us aware of the world’s threaten chimpanzees. Bill Wallauer is a man living a dream. After meeting the world renown Jane Goodall while working as a Peace Corps volunteer, Bill knew what his mission in life was. Today, Bill is a sought-after speaker for adults and youth. His infectious personality, great stories and chimpanzee multimedia presentation help audiences understand the chimpanzees’ behavior and emotional capacity, and the similarities and differences between humans and chimps. Bill’s passion for the chimps he knows so intimately truly makes him the Jane Goodall Institute’s “Chimp Champion.” Come and hear his stories in the making of Disney Nature’s chimpanzee.

Come and bring the kids for a few hours or all day and learn about the history of wildlife films and have a lot of fun too. And it’s FREE! Visit www.mwlf.org for more information.
Volunteers needed for Reading Buddies program at library

Volunteers are needed for the Reading Buddies program at the Gig Harbor branch of the Pierce County Library System, 4424 Point Fosdick Drive NW. Reading buddy volunteers are mentors who give children extra reading practice in a fun environment. They are not tutors. Youth and volunteers read and play literacy games with young readers.

Volunteer applications for ages 11 and older are due by Friday, Sept. 26 and there is volunteer training 4 to 5 p.m., Monday, Sept. 29. Ask at the Help Desk for a reading buddy application and criminal background check form. Visit piercecountylibrary.org, search site: volunteer. Fill out library volunteer application.

Parents of children ages 5 to 8 who may be interested in the program can pick up an application at the Help Desk.

For information, call the library at 253-548-3305.

Funding for participation in youth sports programs available

Local youth recreational organizations looking to help low-income kids participate in their programs now have an opportunity to receive financial assis-
tance.

The Greater Gig Harbor Foundation's Recreation Community Activity Board hosted the inaugural Big Sports Gig on March 22 — that featured former Seattle Mariners pitcher Brian Holman, former Seattle Sounders forward Roger Levesque, and current Gig Harbor Canoe and Kayak team head coach Alan Anderson as guest speakers at the dinner and auction event. The group met its goal of raising $10,000 to begin a scholarship fund to help kids participate in local sports who are otherwise financially unable to do so.

The foundation now is seeking out local youth recreation programs that can use funding assistance to offer scholarships or reduced rates for these kids that will allow them to participate.

Any nonprofit youth recreation organization operating on the Gig Harbor and/or Key peninsulas is eligible to receive funds. Qualifying organizations are asked to contact the Greater Gig Harbor Foundation at 253-514-6338 to request an application for scholarship funds from the newly established Big Sports Gig Recreational Scholarship Fund.

Grant awards will be given up to $1,500 and will be awarded on an as-needed basis throughout the year.

For information, contact Ric Hallock, GGHF Recreation CAB chair, at gghfrecesscholarship@gigharborfoundation.org.
Return of The King: Elvis memorabilia comes to Tacoma

BY CRAIG SAILOR
Staff writer  October 8, 2014  Updated 5 hours ago

Phillip Stanic was 21 when his father sat him down and made a startling confession: Stanic was adopted, and his biological father was the legendary performer Elvis Presley.

Today, Stanic, 52, is known as Elvis Aaron Presley Jr. He's a performer and the owner of the Private Collection of the King on Tour — part of what he touts as the largest private collection of Elvis memorabilia and artifacts outside of Graceland.

The exhibit will be on display through Sunday at the Tacoma Fall RV Show at the Tacoma Dome. Elvis Aaron Presley Jr. — he goes by Stanic — is planning on touring the United States in a custom vintage 1960s bus, signing autographs, performing and much more.
Republican, who received a major out-of-state infusion from two Bridge from a national Republican group. The Republican State
National Republican party, which made down-ballot races, has given $300,000 to Senator Schrader over the past month.
JordanSchra
d@wsuw.edu

NURSES
with Ebola in just three of 48 facilities, Tacoma General Hospital, Mary Bridge
Children’s Center, and Good Samaritan Hospital in Puyallup. Any potentially
infected person who arrives at any part of that system would then be transferred to one of those
three facilities.

Tacoma Pierce
County Health Department also is quite strong. “Pierce County has not suffered any of the rate other health
departments in the state have,” Jordan-Schra
d said.

The estimated cost of detection and early isolation is small. But when the Centers for Disease
Control and Prevention held a conference call Tuesday on President Obama’s foreign policy of a “strategic
and supporting Regional Stability
A SYMPOSIUM ON THE UNITED STATES’ STRATEGIC
A Karen from Burma
Stephen Dunn
Lieutenant General, U.S. Army
the 201st Battlefield Surveillance Brigade “Gryphons”

The Tacoma-Pierce
County Health Department has not suffered any of the cuts other
health departments in the area have,” said Stephen-Selby.

Stephen-Selby said. “They don’t have to admit them.
and manage patients and then make the best decision on behalf of staff and
patients to send the patient to a propagated facility.”

SAFETY WORRIES
this past month.
360-786-1826

Kathleen Cooper
253-548-3300

PERMISSION TO START DREAMING
FOUNDATION • EST 2013
THANK YOU!

The Permission To Start Dreaming Foundation extends its heartfelt gratitude to the thousands of participants, sponsors, volunteers, spectators and the entire community of Gig Harbor who made the Prayer Breakfast, Swing For A Soldier Golf Tournament and Race For A Soldier Half Marathon a huge success. Your support and presence let our military men and women know they are not alone and is helping to heal one Soldier at a time, giving them Permission To Start Dreaming!

RACE FOR A SOLDIER
Prayer Breakfast
SWING FOR A SOLDIER
PRES ntED BY

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Thank you to Route 16 Running & Walking, The City of Gig Harbor, Cantwell Golf Community, the YMCA and the 2011 Battlefield Surveillance Brigade “Gryphons”
Local filmmaker makes a splash with wakeboard Fox Island native’s extreme sports film debuts Friday

BY KAREN MILLER

G
rowing up on Fox Island, Filmmaker Sean Kilgus learned to wakeboard in the 1990s. Kilgus’ latest wakeboard film, “Prime,” debuts Friday at the Wave House in Seattle after premiering last weekend in New Zealand.

“I had friends on wakeboarding movies. His latest, ‘Prime,’ will have its world premier in Seattle on Friday. Kilgus’ latest wakeboard film, “Prime,” premieres in Seattle on Friday.

Exposure to wakeboarders was one of the reasons Kilgus started small making extreme sports films. The 1995 Gig Harbor High School grad began his career on Horsehead Bay, filming and wakeboarding there. “I worked on a small boat of wakeboard riders,” Kilgus said, “I learned on wakeboarding and it was always the thing I had the most passion for.”

The Kilgus family is from Fox Island, his home. While doing a trick, he was injured out of a Robinson R-44 helicopter. Kilgus said, “I’m in the movie doing tricks so one has ever seen.”

“I wanted to do everything I could to help him,” Kilgus said.

Kilgus rose up the ranks in wakeboarding. His last four films, like “White Walls,” have special meaning. Proceeds from the films go to two riders, Brad Smeele and Matt Manzari. Proceeds from the film will go to two riders, Brad Smeele and Matt Manzari.

Kilgus, now 27, says his latest film, “Prime,” is in the movie doing tricks so one has ever seen. “I wanted to do everything I could to help him,” Kilgus said.

Manzari was injured out of the water. “White Wall” is the only film that has two riders, Brad Smeele and Matt Manzari. While doing a trick, he was injured doing tricks.

At the screening, attendees have the option of contributing to funds for Smeele and Manzari. Tickets for the screening are $15 and are available only at ticketbase.com.

Kilgus said, “I always wanted to do it back home.” The 1995 Gig Harbor High School grad began his filming and wakeboarding career on Horsehead Bay, filming and wakeboarding there. "A passion for wakeboard in the one thing I’ve always done," he said. "I always want to do it back home."

The Kilgus family is from Fox Island, his home. He lost four films, like “Prime,” because of his promotion at the Snowboard World Cup in Seattle. It’s important for him to bring professional wakeboarding rights to the area he’s used to making films in the Pacific Northwest, he said.

Kilgus said, “I always wanted to do it back home.” The 1995 Gig Harbor High School grad began his filming and wakeboarding career on Horsehead Bay, filming and wakeboarding there. "A passion for wakeboard in the one thing I’ve always done," he said. "I always want to do it back home."
Puylup to replace pavement with greener

BY JON AEDES
Staff writer

With the help of a Portland-based nonprofit, Puylup RD is in the process of becoming a bit greener.

Volunteers broken ground Saturday on an ambitious project: a front section of main road in the city will be replaced with low-maintenance plants, trees and other greenery.

The project will add an aesthetically-pleasing, roughly 2,000 square-feet of greener space in an urban area.

This selection also considers storm water retention and erosion, and the site is near a bus stop.

The New Future Foundation is funding the project through a grant it awarded to the Puyallup Conservation District. Each Puylup project typically happens in two phases, which starts with removing the soil and concludes with installing greener.

Reforming First

As volunteers arrive, students from All Saints Catholic School wait to help and to implement low-maintenance plants and stones to maintain the green space in the future.

While the project will be a great outcome and education opportunity for these students, the learning doesn’t stop there, Beale said. “We’re an opportunity to understand the cycle of how storm water flows through urban areas. Students always think about the impacts of what we do up here on the land.”

Beale said it’s a growing opportunity for everybody involved, not just the school kids, Beale said. “We’re an opportunity to understand that cycle for storm water and how urban areas inevitably have impacts on waterways. I think about the impacts of what we do up here on the land.”

In addition, the new greener opportunity will benefit the site is near Meeker Creek and Clarks Creek. The Russel Family Foundation is a grant it awarded to the Puyallup Conservation District.

Russel said the project is the second this kind in Pierce County and came about after city staff identified a pavement replacement as it builds All Saints Catholic School.

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Hundreds of students must leave our state to go to medical school.

Washington's population is nearly 7 million. Yet, just 120 Washingtonians are admitted each year to our state's only publicly funded medical school.

As a result, hundreds of our best and brightest leave Washington to attend medical school. The likelihood of them returning here to practice is low.

We are here to help.

Washington State University is working to establish a medical school in Spokane so more Washingtonians can pursue a medical education right here.

And WSU's proposed community-based education approach will place third and fourth year medical students in existing hospitals and clinics around the state—where they are needed most.

Because a world-class WSU health sciences enterprise is already in place in Spokane, only a modest initial investment is needed to create a medical school.

Learn more at medicine.wsu.edu

The wondrous diversity of dirt

BY RACHEL FELTMAN
The Washington Post

New York City’s Central Park is as much of a melting pot as the rest of the city—down to the microbe level. According to a study published last week in the Proceedings of the Royal Society B, there are more than 100,000 species of bacteria living in the park’s soil—and most of them are totally new to science. What’s the coolest thing about this study is that the results aren’t as striking as they sound. In fact, Central Park’s microbial diversity is pretty much on par with the rest of the world. Researchers sampled soil samples pulled from around the park and found more than 100,000 species of bacteria. They also found 1,059 archaebacteria (organisms similar to bacteria) and 41,429 species of multicellular microorganisms such as plants, fungi and lowly critters. When they compared the DNA of these organisms with databases of known species, they found that more than 80 percent of them were new. And of those that “matched” organisms in the database, it’s likely that many were closely related to existing species, and actually represented newly discovered cousins.

When you consider that most of these new microbes are native to New York or came in on the feet of tourists and migrating geese, it’s probably best that we don’t know anything about them yet, including whether they’re native to New York or came in on the feet of tourists and migrating geese, or whether they’re good or bad for the health of the soil and the city. But we do know one thing: Their distinctiveness isn’t actually that distinctive.
Communications

- Scout participant feedback
Other Libraries

- Libraries: The Hartford Public Library
- RISING TO THE CHALLENGE - Re-Envisioning Public Libraries
- Point of view: The power of Oklahoma public libraries
- With no Internet at home, kids crowd libraries for online homework
- Woman accused of burning books at Tacoma Library, downtown branch closed until Tuesday
- Woman pleads not guilty to burning books at Tacoma library
- Bush, Reagan, Nixon books burned at Tacoma library
- Olympia library a hot spot for crime calls to police
Libraries: The Hartford Public Library

One of the great things about working in Hartford is getting to spend time at the main branch of the Hartford Public Library. I discovered this treasure trove a few visits back and, when I found out that those of us working for the theater could get a library card, I was thrilled.

Located on Main Street, this library has everything you could wish for.

A statue of Mark Twain, who lived in Hartford for many years. People gather on the steps of the library. Last year, I sat there and listened to a live concert by a great blues band.
Just to the right of the main entrance is the Kitchen. Yes, you can eat here and the food is great.

Be still my heart. My favorite section, where I happened to find two books I’ve been dying to read. The nice man at the desk renewed my card for me and I checked them out.
There they are! I just finished *Lost for Words* and will be reviewing it here. Last night, I started *Somewhere Safe with Somebody Good*. I was amazed that it was on the shelf, since it was so recently published and most libraries have a waiting list for this title. As I scanned the New Fiction shelves I saw an incredible variety of titles, many of which I have reviewed in recent months. They have *everything*.

I want to live next door to the library. Please? Or maybe even *inside* the library.

Beyond the New Fiction shelves you’ll see lots of computers, available for use by the patrons of the library.

Shelves of books, tables for reading, along with some comfy easy chairs (not seen in this photo.) More tables in the back with gorgeous murals all along that back wall.

View into the Kitchen from inside the library.
Shelves and shelves of books. Around the corner in the back is a huge section full of CDs and DVDs.

And this is just a *portion* of the main floor. There are all sorts of services available: a free library service for immigrants and refugees to help them adjust to life in America, passports, facilities for job research and careers, book clubs and discussions, music scores and sheet music, archival and manuscript materials, ebooks, sound recordings, photographs, exhibitions (last year there was a gorgeous exhibition on the second floor celebrating the 50th anniversary of Hartford Stage,) free jazz performances, and the Hartford History Center. And even more.

This, my friends is what libraries can and do offer. This is what they make available to the citizens of their community, free of charge.

So it boggles my mind that so many communities are cutting the budgets for libraries. If libraries are lost, I don’t give a fig for the future of our culture.

Whatever the cost of our libraries, the price is cheap compared to that of an ignorant nation. – Walter Cronkite.

This library is thriving. I see lots and lots of people there, no matter when I visit. The computers are being used, job searches are going on, books are being read, research is being done.
I told the man at the desk that if I lived in Hartford, I’d want to work there. He said they are taking applications…darn! I live too far away. But seriously, I can’t imagine a more stimulating and rewarding place to work on a daily basis.

Incidentally, One Book One Hartford is celebrating the graphic novel this year. And guess who is one of the speakers? My boss, colleague, and friend, Tony Award-winning Director, Darko Tresnjak. In fact, they were putting up the banners advertising his discussion the day I was there. He’ll be discussing Art Spiegelman’s *In the Shadow of No Towers*, “a powerful and introspective visual account of the tragic events of 9/11 and its life-altering aftermath.”

See? Something for everyone!

Happy Reading.

*Claudia*
RISING TO
THE CHALLENGE
Re-Envisioning Public Libraries

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE
Communications and Society Program
RISEING TO THE CHALLENGE
Re-Envisioning Public Libraries

A report of the Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries

by

Amy K. Garmer
Director
Aspen Institute Dialogue on Public Libraries
The Aspen Institute Communications and Society Program

THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

October 2014
Expanding access to education, learning opportunities and social connections for all is one of the great challenges of our time. It is a challenge made more urgent by the rapid transition from old industrial and service-based economic models to a new economy in which knowledge and creativity are the drivers of productivity and economic growth, and information, technology and learning are central to economic performance and prosperity.

It is not only the economy but all of society that is being reshaped by these trends. Amid these changes, there are divides in wealth, digital inclusion and participation that threaten to widen if we as a nation do not commit to new thinking and aggressive action to provide these opportunities for all.

This is a time of great opportunity for communities, institutions and individuals who are willing to champion new thinking and nurture new relationships. It is a time of particular opportunity for public libraries with their unique stature as trusted community hubs and repositories of knowledge and information.
THE PUBLIC LIBRARY IN THE DIGITAL AGE

Libraries are essential to success and progress in the digital age.

The process of re-envisioning public libraries to maximize their impact reflects:

- Principles that have always been at the center of the public library’s mission—equity, access, opportunity, openness and participation
- The library’s capacity to drive opportunity and success in today’s knowledge-based society
- An emerging model of networked libraries that promotes economies of scale and broadens the library’s resource reach while preserving its local presence
- The library’s fundamental people, place and platform assets

The Dialogue’s perspective on the 21st-century library builds on the public library’s proven track record in strengthening communities and calls for libraries to be centers of learning, creativity and innovation in the digital age. No longer a nice-to-have amenity, the public library is a key partner in sustaining the educational, economic and civic health of the community during a time of dramatic change. Public libraries inspire learning and empower people of all ages. They promote a better trained and educated workforce. They ensure equitable access and provide important civic space for advancing democracy and the common good. Public libraries are engines of development within their communities.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES AT THE CENTER OF THE DIGITAL AGE

Public libraries are poised to play a leading role in helping individuals and communities adapt to this changing world. Many libraries already are linking individuals to information and learning opportunities, driving development and innovation, and serving as community connectors. With nearly 9,000 public library systems and 17,000 library branches and outlets across the country, there is already a significant physical presence and infrastructure to leverage for long-term success.

Enabling all libraries to fulfill their new roles will require library leaders, policy makers and community stakeholders to re-envision the public library and take advantage of the opportunities it offers.
PEOPLE, PLACE AND PLATFORM

The emerging value proposition of the public library is built around three key assets—people, place and platform:

- **PEOPLE.** The public library is a hub of civic engagement, fostering new relationships and strengthening the human capital of the community. Librarians are actively engaged in the community. They connect individuals to a vast array of local and national resources and serve as neutral conveners to foster civic health. They facilitate learning and creation for children and adults alike.

- **PLACE.** The public library is a welcoming space for a wide range of purposes—reading, communicating, learning, playing, meeting and getting business done. Its design recognizes that people are not merely consumers of content but creators and citizens as well. Its physical presence provides an anchor for economic development and neighborhood revitalization, and helps to strengthen social bonds and community identity. The library is also a virtual space where individuals can gain access to information, resources and all the rich experiences the library offers. In the creative design of its physical and virtual spaces the public library defines what makes a great public space.

- **PLATFORM.** The public library is user-centered. It provides opportunities for individuals and the community to gain access to a variety of tools and resources with which to discover and create new knowledge. The platform enables the curation and sharing of the community’s knowledge and innovation. A great library platform is a “third place”—an interactive entity that can facilitate many people operating individually and in groups—and supports the learning and civic needs of the community.
STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

The Dialogue concludes that the long-term health of libraries is essential to the long-term health of the communities they serve and identified four strategic opportunities for action to guide the continuing transformation.

1. ALIGNING LIBRARY SERVICES IN SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY GOALS

Public libraries that align their people, place and platform assets and create services that prioritize and support local community goals will find the greatest opportunities for success in the years ahead. Managers of local governments report that it is often difficult to prioritize libraries over other community services such as museums or parks and recreation departments that also serve a distinctly public mission. What libraries need is to be more intentional in the ways that they deploy resources in the community, and more deeply embedded in addressing the critical challenges facing the community. This will require a level of flexibility and adaptability to change as community needs change. It will also require collaboration among libraries, policy makers and community partners to redefine the role of libraries as institutions that inspire learning, drive development, grow social capital and create opportunities.

2. PROVIDING ACCESS TO CONTENT IN ALL FORMATS

As the public library shifts from a repository for materials to a platform for learning and participation, its ability to provide access to vast amounts of content in all formats is vital. Libraries face two immediate major challenges in providing access to content in all forms:

- Being able to procure and share e-books and other digital content on the same basis as physical versions
- Having affordable, universal broadband technologies that deliver and help create content

Dealing with both challenges have been high priorities for public libraries throughout the country. The challenges have been particularly acute for small libraries, those in rural communities and in some urban areas where limited budgets make access to e-books and upgrades to high-speed broadband difficult despite high community need for and interest in both. Ensuring access to e-books, other e-content and more-than-adequate high-speed broadband is a big concern going forward because it impacts the public library’s ability to fulfill one of its core missions—to procure and share the leading ideas of the day and enable everyone to participate in the world’s conversations.
3. ENSURING THE LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES

Perhaps the greatest challenge facing public libraries today is to transform their service model to meet the demands of the knowledge society while securing a sustainable funding base for the future. With limited and sometimes volatile funding, however, such transformations will be uneven and incomplete. In addition, the highly local nature of public library funding and governance structures may interfere with both rapid and broad-scale progress—the kind of scale needed to compete and thrive in a world of global networks. Challenges that shape the discussion about long-term public library sustainability given their vital role in the digital era include:

- Identifying reliable sources of revenue for daily operations as well as long-term planning and investment
- Exploring alternative governance structures and business models that maximize efficient and sustainable library operations and customer service
- Becoming more skilled at measuring outcomes rather than counting activities
- Balancing the local and national library value proposition to consider economies of scale in a networked world without compromising local control

4. CULTIVATING LEADERSHIP

Leadership is needed across the community—from elected officials, government leaders, business and civic leaders and libraries themselves—to build communities and public libraries that thrive and succeed together. Vision is a critical component of leadership. Every community needs a vision and a strategic plan for how to work with the public library to directly align the library and its work with the community’s educational, economic and other key goals. It must have input from all stakeholder groups in the community. Key steps in building community leadership to support the public library include improving communications with community leaders, developing community champions, strengthening intersections with diverse communities and communities of color, reaching out to and engaging with young-professional organizations and demonstrating the collective impact of partners working together.
RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

Re-Envisioning Public Libraries
Expanding access to education, learning opportunities and social connection for all is one of the great challenges of our time. It is a challenge made more urgent by the rapid transition from old industrial and service-based economic models to a new economy in which knowledge and creativity are the drivers of productivity and economic growth, and information, technology and learning are central to economic performance and prosperity. It is not only the economy but all of society that is being reshaped by these trends. Amid these changes, there are troubling divides in wealth, digital inclusion and participation that threaten to widen if we as a nation do not commit to new thinking and aggressive action to provide these opportunities for all.
The digital era has produced remarkable changes in everyday life—for the individual as well as for the community.

- Social media connect people across town and around the world, enabling new kinds of communities that transcend geographic barriers.

- Mobile technologies provide always-on connectivity to people and information, and they enable us to enjoy more highly personalized and immediate experiences with information, media, education and commerce.

- Advances in sensors and related technology are making individuals healthier and our communities even “smarter” while at the same time creating mountains of data to be filtered, analyzed and turned into new knowledge.

- Informed, engaged citizens demand a stronger voice and greater participation in shaping their communities and increased government transparency and accountability.

- Entire industries are upended by the sometimes disrupting impact of digital technologies; new markets, new businesses, and new relationships arise from the global to the hyperlocal levels, in some cases affording greater choice in where to live and work.

Among the transformative social changes brought on by digitization are new information and learning environments in which knowledge is no longer stable over many years and skills quickly become obsolete.

“We have experienced a huge ‘Gutenberg-scale’ inflection point in the last 10 years. The world has gone from connected to hyperconnected and from interconnected to interdependent.”

—THOMAS FRIEDMAN

These environments are shaped by a vast explosion of easily accessible information and new definitions of community, as well as a need for new resources and skills. The changes and their impacts are dramatic:

- **TECHNOLOGY** has made it possible for individuals to have instant access in their homes or on portable devices to the equivalent of the Library of Congress’s entire holdings.¹

- **COMMUNITIES**, once defined almost exclusively by geographic boundaries, are increasingly shaped by social media, often based on mutual interests rather than physical location. Networks, rather than neighborhoods, have become the dominant form of social organization.

- **EMPLOYMENT** is increasingly transient, with the average worker staying in a job 4.4 years rather than an entire career. Among workers born between 1979 and 1999, average tenure is 2.2 years or less.² Keeping up with a more mobile job marketplace requires access to information and resources and skills to navigate vast amounts of information.
The knowledge economy requires individuals to acquire a range of skills and to continuously adapt those skills to changing circumstances. Author and New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman has written about the impact that the evolution to a digitally driven economy, with its demand for continual renewal of skills, is having on individuals and communities. Friedman calls it “a 401(k) world—a world of defined contributions, not defined benefits.”

“We have experienced a huge ‘Gutenberg-scale’ inflection point in the last 10 years. The world has gone from connected to hyperconnected and from interconnected to interdependent. This has been such a shift in degree that it has become a shift in kind,” Friedman says in a 2014 interview. Driving this big shift is the emergence and rapid diffusion of four major technologies—personal computing, the Internet, collaborative workflow software and search capabilities (e.g., Google)—which Friedman observes has created “a platform on which more people from more places could compete, connect and collaborate—as individuals or companies—for less money with greater efficiency and greater ease than ever before.”

To a significant degree, the knowledge economy gives birth to the creation economy, a free-agent economy in which opportunities for lifelong learning must be abundant and people need skills as knowledge creators, not simply information consumers.

Importantly, these learning opportunities must be present throughout the community and persistent throughout a lifetime. “Now the half-life of a skill is down to about five years, and genres have a lifetime of four or five years, so most learning in the future won’t go on in schools,” said John Seely Brown, co-director of the Deloitte Center for the Edge, at the first meeting of the Dialogue working group. “We’ve shifted from stable stocks of knowledge and an archived world to a world of information flows, participation and states of confusion. Now we create as fast as we learn. The game is more complicated.”

At the same time that the half-life of a skill is shrinking, information is becoming more abundant and the means of production are becoming more accessible. This opens up new channels for sharing and the distribution of knowledge. A state of information abundance places a premium on the ability to navigate, create and innovate in this new environment. The ability to exploit these means of production and knowledge sharing has become the new “literacy.” In this environment, success will belong to the “entrepreneurial learner,” the person capable of finding resources anywhere and using them to read the world and teach themselves.

The sweeping changes underway pose new and sustained challenges for communities, which are changing as well. Over the next three decades, the U.S. population is expected to grow to more than 400 million, with most of that growth coming from immigration.
By 2050, one in five Americans will be an immigrant, and 30 percent of the population is projected to be Hispanic. The United States is aging, too: By 2050, one in five Americans will be over the age of 65. Concurrent with these demographic changes are fundamental shifts in the economy that change how Americans will learn and earn a living.

In its 2009 report, the Knight Commission on the Information Needs of Communities in a Democracy described the digital era as a moment of technological opportunity “unleashing innovation in the creation and distribution of information” and requiring “new thinking and aggressive action.”

The Commission went on to say, “Every advance in communications technology expands the possibilities for American democracy, but every information system also creates potential winners and losers.”

How we seize this moment of opportunity, and the visions and actions that carry us forward into the future, will affect not only the health and prosperity of individuals and families, but the quality of the democratic communities that we nourish and sustain in the 21st century. Will they be thriving, prosperous and sustainable communities that attract new residents? Will they be places where we will want to live?

WHAT PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES NEED TO FLOURISH IN THE KNOWLEDGE ECONOMY

LIFELONG ACCESS to an ever-increasing and ever-changing body of knowledge and tools to ensure that their skills remain relevant to the current economy as it continues to evolve

THE CAPACITY AND DISPOSITION TO LEARN IN SMALL, QUICK DOSES rather than wade through mounds of links and piles of data that provide too much information and too little knowledge

THE ABILITY TO USE, UNDERSTAND AND PROCESS INFORMATION IN MANY DIFFERENT FORMS including text, data, audio and video and to evaluate the quality of information from different sources and understand its relevance.

PLACES TO GATHER, collaborate and contribute to knowledge development

ACCESS TO CONVERSATIONS AMONG CREATIVE PEOPLE in their areas of interest so that they can innovate and develop or maintain a competitive advantage in the knowledge economy

People and communities need PUBLIC LIBRARIES.
Approaches to managing the opportunities and risks of this new era can differ widely from community to community, but there are approaches that are emerging as indicators of success. One of these is re-envisioning the role of the public library as a vital learning institution and engine for individual, community and civil society development.

The library, the most democratic of public institutions, is the essential civil society space where this new America will make its democratic character. The library is a core civil society institution, democracy’s “maker space.” In a healthy democracy, civil society is the piece that makes the rest of the democratic machinery possible and workable. Most simply, civil society consists of everything that falls under the rubric of voluntary association, from churches to neighborhood associations, softball leagues to garden clubs.

Civil society performs a number of critical functions: It provides a buffer between the individual and the power of the state and the market, it creates social capital, and it develops democratic values and habits. Civil society is where citizens become citizens. By design and tradition, the public library is the essential civil society institution. Through the provision of space, information and inspiration, it enables all the others.

The institution of the public library is uniquely positioned to provide access, skills, context and trusted platforms for adapting in this new society.
My family loves to read, so when we moved to Oklahoma 12 years ago, as soon as the boxes were unpacked, we made a beeline for the Moore Public Library.

Though avid library patrons for many years previously, we needed the library as never before because we could no longer afford to purchase even one book for our children due to some unexpected and serious financial challenges.

While our financial means were severely limited during that time, our weekly trips to the library with our five children did much to blunt the blow.

Even as my husband and I struggled to navigate the tough times behind the scenes, we enjoyed a rich life with our children due, in great part, to the bounty of books that flowed through our home during that time thanks to the Pioneer Library System.

I can still remember the adventures we enjoyed around the kitchen table and on the family room couch when my kids were younger, as I read aloud from numerous books, including “Winnie-the-Pooh,” “The Tale of Despereaux” and “Holes.” As our children evolved into independent readers, they read more and more on their own, diving into everything from the Harry Potter novels to “Inkheart” and begging for more frequent trips to the library.

Though there were a lot of uncertainties during that time, going to the library at least once a week was something my kids and I could count on, something we looked forward to.

Our financial situation has improved dramatically in the years since, but our trips to the library have remained constant. We've checked out so many books over the years that if there was a prize for “Most Books Checked out by One Family in Oklahoma” I'm sure we'd be in the running.

I feel a little sheepish when I think of all the library staff hours devoted to locating and pulling our online book requests at the various branches throughout the system to have them sent to our particular branch for pick-up. “I can’t believe it,” I imagine one of them saying. “It's another book for the Woods family!”

When my 11-year-old son won a big reading award at school a couple of years ago, another mother expressed frustration that her son didn’t read as much as mine did. She wanted to know my secret. I told her that we just try to help him find books he'll love. My philosophy is that if a kid doesn’t like to read, he or she probably hasn’t met the right book yet.
A few months after the awards ceremony, that same woman’s son accompanied my son and me to the Southwest Oklahoma City Library for a book run. His eyes grew wide the moment we walked through the doors. He was clearly in awe, so I asked him if he had ever been there before and he said no, that he had never been to the public library little more than a mile south of our neighborhood.

I wanted to tell his mom and parents everywhere, “Take your kids to the library! If you can’t help them find books they’ll love, the librarians will!”

What has all of our family’s reading thanks to the library added up to? Good memories, to be sure, but also academic achievement. I’m sure of it. When one of my children wins a competition or award, an administrator or competition organizer who believes in the connection between pleasure reading and academic success will sometimes ask if my children are avid readers, and the answer is, of course, yes. And a big part of the reason I can say yes is because of the library. If my children had not had such unfettered access to the wealth of books available in our local libraries, I do not think they would be the readers they are today.

So, when our daughters scored 35s on their ACTs and were named National Merit Scholars and Oklahoma Academic All-State Scholars and were awarded major college scholarships, my husband and I felt proud of their hard work, pleased with their teachers’ investment in their educations and good about our support of their intellectual growth. We also felt tremendously grateful to Oklahoma public libraries because they ensured that even when we couldn’t afford to give our children the best, they would still have the best — a life enriched by books.

— Debra Sansing Woods, for The Oklahoman
With no Internet at home, kids crowd libraries for online homework

By DOUGLAS HANKS

Miami Herald October 16, 2014

MIAMI - Once again, Christina Morua found herself in the South Dade library longer than she would like on a school night. The 28-year-old single mom sat in the bustling children's section on a recent Thursday, waiting for her fourth-grader to get on a computer and start some online math homework.

"We don't have any Internet at home," Morua said as her oldest, 11-year-old Abel, clicked through an assignment on a library laptop while Alina, 9, waited for her turn at a desktop. "We just reserved a computer. We have to wait 70 minutes. He got one of the last laptops."

With more school materials heading online, parents like Morua here and elsewhere across the country find they can no longer count on home for homework. That leaves libraries as a crucial venue for their youngest patrons, but funding challenges, reduced hours on school nights and aging equipment have made it harder to meet the demand.

"The laptops we do have, the batteries aren't working," said Patricia Readon, a librarian working the children's desk at the South Dade branch in Cutler Bay. "You can check out a laptop, and the next 30 minutes it's dead. The sad part is, if you don't have a computer, you can't do your homework."

Morua's long wait for a computer offers a flip side to the current debate over how best to reinvent Miami-Dade's libraries. That discussion has largely focused on how to attract people with no current interest in libraries - entrepreneurs who need office space, twenty-somethings who might like a Starbucks near the checkout counter, and 3-D printers for the "maker" movement of techie do-it-yourselfers.

Yet for families without access to online homework, libraries are already the place to be on school nights. It's just the lack of computers that has them complaining.

"I work nights," Pauline Theobolds explained as her 12-year-old son, Cameron, used a South Dade laptop. They have a computer at home, but it doesn't seem to work properly with Cameron's school connection. Theobolds' shift as a nurse requires them to leave the library by 6:30 p.m. "The other night was tight because they didn't have any computers."

Miami-Dade's library system has an extra $4 million to spend this year, thanks to a sharp increase in the special property tax that funds the system.

But with higher labor costs, expanded operating hours for larger branches and beefed-up budgets for children's books and online tutoring, the system doesn't have funds to increase the number of computer stations, said Gia Arbogast, the county's interim library director. Even the countywide scheduling changes that returned seven-day service to larger branches complicates the homework scene. Some smaller branches, including Coral Gables and Kendall, closed on school nights to be open Friday or Sunday.
On the bright side, Arbogast said, there will be money to replace aging laptop computers with new SurfacePro tablets. That should ease the pressure at crunch time on school nights.

"It's a priority for us," Arbogast said. "It's an ongoing demand that we are struggling to keep up with."

Miami-Dade's school system discourages teachers from assigning online homework if all students in the class don't have access to the Internet after school, said Sylvia Diaz, assistant schools superintendent for innovation.

"We really shouldn't be requiring kids to go to the library to complete assignments," Diaz said. "A project or something special is OK, but not daily homework assignments that are dependent on computer use."

That's the guidance at the Somerset charter school the Moruas' children attend in Homestead, Fla. "I'm not happy," said principal Cristina Cruz-Ortiz. "The student has to just tell the teacher he doesn't have Internet access."

Whatever the official position on digital learning, there is no mistaking the online migration under way in Miami-Dade County schools.

Miami-Dade recently shifted to digital history textbooks for high school freshmen, providing all ninth-graders with tablets containing the interactive books. County elementary schools now incorporate the online program called Reflex Math, which looks like a video game and can be accessed by students 24 hours a day. And with printed-material budgets under pressure, some students describe traditional textbooks as valuable commodities.

Isaiah Goulbourne, 16 and a junior at Miami Norland Senior High School, said there is a textbook waiting for him each day for English, but it never leaves the classroom. "We're not allowed to take them home because there aren't enough for everyone," he said. "Most of our textbooks are accessible online."

Goulbourne said he relies on the North Dade library for online schoolwork because he doesn't have Internet access at home. It is a common need at the branch in Miami Gardens, where one in five residents lives below the poverty level.

A 2011 survey of young patrons found about 45 percent reported having no online access at home. Estimates by the nonprofit group EveryoneOn.org that 35 percent of Miami-Dade's households lack an Internet connection, given the county's poverty rate. Research by the school system puts the estimate closer to 25 percent, while the latest Census figures estimate 19 percent of children nationally live in households without Internet.

The North Dade branch has the second-largest number of computers in the library system - 107, compared to 49 in South Dade - along with a pioneering national program for teens called YouMedia that pairs pricey computer equipment with creative endeavors.

"Right now, I'm learning Python," Favour Nkwocha, 17, said as he worked on a coding tutorial on a YouMedia Macintosh. Nearby, Brianna Thompson pointed to an illustration of a fairy that was taped to the wall of the converted periodical room. The 17-year-old, who wore a handmade backpack crocheted with 2,000 bottle caps, created the sprightly drawing using a miniature digital easel. "I like Photoshop the best," she said.

Youmedia, funded with start-up money from the Miami-based Knight Foundation, is open to any teenager 14 and older with a library card. Miami-Dade plans to use some of the new library dollars to open a new Youmedia program in the South Dade branch next year.

While it may seem like a computer lab from Glee - a recent visit had a 19-year-old singing before a green screen in the video area while another teenager danced to some digital music created by one of the program's young composers - Youmedia also attracts high schoolers who need basic online access.
Keturah Goulbourne, Isaiah’s older sister, used one of the Youmedia Macs to pull up her civics textbook from Norland. She has no hard copy, and said sometimes her teacher will use the classroom’s wall-size computer screen to show entire pages so that students can take notes on the text. "I love coming here," said Keturah, 18.

Access watchdogs praise school systems for moving learning online. But they say the pace must match educators’ ability to make sure students from low-income families are not at an even worse disadvantage by having to leave home to complete their homework.

"The sequencing has to make sense - otherwise you create deeper gaps," said Zach Leverenz, CEO of EveryoneOn, which works with Miami-Dade and other school systems to provide subsidized online access for students. "What I don’t think is a good stopgap is assuming students are going to be able to find public (Internet) hot spots, including libraries."

Comcast’s Internet Essentials effort offers $10 monthly Internet service to families that qualify for school-lunch help, while Miami-Dade schools’ Connect@Home program has passed out home Internet devices that provide free Wi-Fi for about 2,000 households. It’s a tiny subset of a system with 300,000 students, but the start of what administrators say will be a larger effort in the coming years to level the digital playing field.

"The goal is really to get to a point where kids do have a personal device and have Internet access outside of school," said Diaz, the school system’s digital-learning chief. "Unfortunately, so many of our kids are poor, so it’s rather challenging."

For Morua’s son Abel, online homework has made multiplication exponentially more fun than it might be for an 11-year-old sent home with an arithmetic workbook. "This is Mathletics," the fifth-grader said, pointing to the library laptop’s screen, which showed a T-shirt-wearing cartoon character next to a math problem awaiting an answer. "That’s my avatar."

He solved problems rapid-fire as his sister waited for her computer to become available. Christina, their mother, said she had to drop home Internet service when she decided to pursue a nursing degree. "That was an expense that had to be cut," she said.

Michele Stiles, the library branch manager and a veteran of the system, said she has seen similar back-ups at other locations. There isn’t much librarians can do except fill out a form certifying that there were not enough computers for a child to finish an assignment.

"If you ever come here and there is a long wait for a computer," Stiles told Morua, "you can get an 'excuse note' from the front."

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Today's Circulars
Woman accused of burning books at Tacoma Library, downtown branch closed until Tuesday

By Alexis Krell

Staff writerOctober 18, 2014

A woman set books ablaze Saturday at the Tacoma Public Library's downtown branch, closing the building for a couple of days, officials said.

A library patron had been at the Main Library at 1102 Tacoma Ave. S., left, then returned with a bottle of lighter fluid about 10:30 a.m., spokesman David Domkoski said.

She’s accused of heading to the back of the first floor, to the nonfiction shelves, and lighting four books on fire, damaging the tomes and some carpet.

“That generated a lot of smoke and fumes,” Domkoski said, which prompted staff to close the branch. “It came out of nowhere.”

A security guard quickly put out the fire with an extinguisher, and library staff evacuated the building.

No one was hurt.

Police found and arrested the woman nearby, Domkoski said.

The library will reopen at 11 a.m. Tuesday. Books can still be returned to the Main Library while it’s closed.

A Tacoma Reads event set for 2:30 p.m. Saturday will be rescheduled. The library had planned to show a movie called “Paycheck to Paycheck: The Life & Times of Katrina Gilbert.”

“It’s a beautiful film,” Domkoski said.

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Commenting FAQs | Terms of Service
A woman pleaded not guilty Monday to charges she used newly bought lighter fluid to set several books on fire at the Tacoma library’s main branch.

Sharon Agnes Sailly, known as Sunhine to library staff members, faces one count of first-degree arson in connection to the Saturday blaze, according to court records.
The library at 1102 Tacoma Ave. S. was closed after the blaze because of smoke and fumes. It is expected to reopen 11 a.m. Tuesday (Oct. 21).

An attorney for Sailly could not be reached Monday.

Charging papers give this account:

Surveillance video shows Sailly, 60, walk into the library with a bag, head to the northwestern corner and set several books on fire using lighter fluid. Flames damaged the books, carpet and a shelf.

Staff members put out the fire before firefighters arrived. Visitors were escorted out of the building.

Police found a half-empty bottle of charcoal lighter, and a Safeway receipt in the bag Sailly left behind that showed the accelerant was bought that morning.

Officers found the woman at Ninth Street and Commerce Avenue. She told them she had been at the library earlier and had an issue with a staff member.

Sailly admitted to having matches and being at Safeway that day as well. Asked whether she bought the lighter fluid, she said: “I wanted to burn the library.”

She expected the sprinkler system to go off, she said.

Sailly has a previous arson conviction, prosecutors said. Details of that fire were not available.

Court Commissioner Meagan Foley ordered Sailly held in lieu of $500,000 bail. Among the conditions of her release, Sailly was not to contact the library or have incendiary materials.

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Commenting FAQs | Terms of Service
TACOMA, Wash. — Biographies of George Bush, Ronald Reagan and Richard Nixon accounted for most of the dozen books burned in a fire at the Tacoma Main Library.

Library workers don't think the motive for Saturday's fire was political. It was set in the American History section.

KING reports (http://is.gd/W4ygbW ) Sharon Sailly of Tacoma pleaded not guilty Monday to an arson charge and was ordered jailed on $500,000 bail.

Court papers say she poured lighter fluid on the books and started the fire because she had an issue with a librarian. The fire forced about 250 patrons to evacuate the downtown library.


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Commenting FAQs | Terms of Service
What’s Happening

- Is Your Child Ready to Read? A Checklist
- Translating STEM: From Curriculum to Career
- Are book clubs the wave of the future at work?
- E-books Still Outsold by Hardcover and Paperback
- Print Books Outsold Ebooks in First Half of 2014
We live in a culture deeply devoted to getting its citizens to read at the earliest possible age. Whether it’s flashcards, alphabet-focused toys, iPad reading apps or “teachable moments about letters” sprinkled throughout daily life with toddlers and preschoolers, we seem hellbent on hatching early readers.

And parents feel little choice in the matter: sadly, a 5- or 6-year-old kindergarten student in public or conventional private school who isn’t quite fluent with letters is already behind the 8-ball!

Child psychologist David Elkind has devoted his professional life at Tufts University to studying the costs of “hurrying” children. He points out that true reading readiness only emerges once a child has attained the neuro-cognitive milestone of syllogistic reasoning (“All men are mortal; Socrates is a man; thus Socrates is mortal”), which dawns during the concrete operational stage of cognitive development. This “con-op leap” happens around age seven, and is a biologically based milestone, just like the shedding of baby teeth or the onset of puberty. How many parents fret if their son hasn’t managed to lose his first tooth as soon as his friend did... or if their daughter at thirteen “still just has not been able to get her period“? We wisely recognize that biology has its own internal timeline, but where neurobiology is concerned, well, that’s a different animal. We get anxious. We want to get in there and... tinker and tweak... optimize... accelerate... give them a head start. So we reach for the flashcards.

**ASSESSING YOUR CHILD’S READING READINESS: A CHECKLIST**

[Not meant as medical advice, but as guidelines for parents in noticing sensory-motor integration and development in their young children. Thanks to developmental and behavioral pediatrician Dr. Susan Johnson for contributing important information to this guide.]

True reading readiness (as opposed to forced “reading readiness”) is a biological phenomenon, and requires that a child has passed a number of benchmarks of sensory-motor integration—which is an aspect of healthy brain development! Many of these benchmarks have been passed when a child is able to do the following:
• Pay attention and sit still in a chair for at least 20 minutes (without needing to wiggle or sit on his feet or wrap his feet around the legs of the chair as a way to locate his body in space)
• Balance on one foot, without her knees touching, and in stillness, with both arms out to her sides—and count backwards without losing her balance.
• Stand on one foot, with arms out in front of him, palms facing up, with both eyes closed for 10 seconds and not fall over.
• Reproduce various geometric shapes, numbers, or letters onto a piece of paper with a pencil while someone else traces these shapes, letters, or numbers on her back.
• Walk on a balance beam
• Jump rope by themselves, forwards & backwards
• Skip in a cross-lateral pattern (opposite arm & leg extending)

If children can’t do these tasks easily, their vestibular and proprioceptive (sensory-motor) neural systems are not yet well-integrated, and chances are they will have difficulty sitting still, listening, focusing their eyes, focusing their attention, and remembering letters and numbers in the classroom.

HOW YOU CAN FOSTER YOUR CHILD’S READING READINESS

Support for sensory-motor integration comes not from flashcards or “educational” apps—but from the following activities.

PHYSICAL MOVEMENTS, SUCH AS:

• Skipping (cross-lateral)
• Hopping
• Rolling down hills
• Playing catch with a ball
• Jumping rope
• Running
• Walking
• Clapping games
• Circle games
FINE MOTOR ACTIVITIES TO STRENGTHEN IMPORTANT NEURAL PATHWAYS, SUCH AS:

- Cutting with scissors
- Digging in the garden
- Kneading dough (play or bread!)
- Pulling weeds
- Painting
- Beading
- Drawing
- String games (e.g., Jacob’s Ladder)
- Sewing
- Finger crochet/knitting

By contrast, watching television/videos and playing video or computer games are poor sources of stimulation for sensory-motor development. They may actually interfere with the healthy integration of the young nervous system, by keeping the child’s nervous system in a state of stress, in which the “fight/flight/freeze” system is repeatedly activated.

SPOTTING OBSTACLES TO READING READINESS

Children who have difficulties reading and writing often also have

- a poorly developed sense of balance
- difficulty making eye contact
- difficulty tracking or following with their eyes, w/o moving head, for 90 sec., or steadily converging their eyes on an object coming closer (going “cross-eyed”)
- trouble distinguishing the right side of their body from the left
- difficulty sitting still in a chair (tendency to wriggle around, sit on one or both feet, or wrap feet around chair legs—in order to locate the body in space)
- poor muscle tone exemplified by a slumped posture
- a tense or fisted pencil grip
- “flat feet” (collapsed arches)
- oversensitivity to touch
- overactive sympathetic nervous system (fight/flight/freeze), thus extra sensitive to the stimulant effects of sugar, chocolate, lack of sleep, changes in routines, watching television, playing computer/video games
Sometimes these children have difficulties in their peer relationships because they are using their mind and eyes to help their body navigate in space, and miss the non-verbal social cues from their playmates.

TRUSTING NATURE’S TIMETABLE

Developmental pediatrician Susan Johnson has seen children diagnosed with AD/HD or learning disabilities “miraculously” improve when they are taken out of an academic kindergarten or given an extra year in a developmental kindergarten that emphasizes movement, play, and the integration of their sensory-motor systems.

We wouldn’t label a child with a disorder (or try to hurry them along) if she was “late” to lose her first tooth or begin menstruating. Reading is similarly linked to a child’s uniquely unfolding biology, so relax and enjoy your children’s childhood!! Read to them, tell them stories, let them play, putter, and pretend: that is the most reliable foundation for your children’s healthiest brain development and later reading skills and academic success!

For further, more detailed, information, see Dr. Johnson’s article “Teaching Our Children to Write, Read, and Spell.”
Top image by tornatore, through a Creative Commons license.

ABOUT MARCY AXNESS

I’m the author of Parenting for Peace: Raising the Next Generation of Peacemakers, and also the adoption expert on Mothering’s expert panel. I write and speak on prenatal, child and parent development and I have a private practice coaching parents-in-progress. I raised two humans, earned a doctorate, and lived to report back. As a gift to Mothering readers I’m offering a unique 7-step parenting tool, a “Quick-Start Guide to Shifting Your Child’s Perplexing, Stuck Behaviors.”

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I’m the author of Parenting for Peace: Raising the Next Generation of Peacemakers, and I write and speak worldwide on prenatal, child and parent development. I also have a private practice coaching parents-in-progress. I’d say my most important (and joyful!) credential, though, is being mother to Ian and Eve, both flourishing in their twenties. As a gift to mothering.com readers I’m offering a free copy of my "Empowered Birth Checklist for Couples" booklet: 25 concrete ways you can confidently parent during this momentous family experience!

- See more at: http://www.mothering.com/articles/is-your-child-ready-to-read-a-checklist/#sthash.01yBQIO8.36yxNZrD.dpuf
Translating STEM: From Curriculum to Career

A look at how to improve the quality and experience of STEM education in the U.S.

By Antonia Malchik | ParentMap.com

You’ve probably heard the dire news: American kids are falling behind the rest of the world in STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education. STEM jobs are going unfilled because there aren’t enough qualified applicants. The U.S. has a STEM shortage; a STEM problem.

But what does it all mean, in real terms, for your child’s education? What is a STEM job, where is the shortage; and how does the need for these workers trickle down to the curriculum taught in your own school?

To begin with, what exactly are these jobs we keep hearing about?

STEM jobs today and tomorrow

A spokesperson for the National Institutes of Health says that for the NIH to accomplish its mission it must either hire or support through grants “a surprising variety of STEM specialties.” The NIH “uses all of the scientific specialties you might imagine being involved in medical research (doctors, nurses, microbiologists, geneticists, etc.) and also many specialties you might not imagine (mathematicians, physicists, computer scientists, medical artists).”

“If a biologist gets a job in a cancer lab, I’d say that’s a STEM job, even though that person may not spend much time doing mathematics or engineering,” says Raymond Johnson, a doctoral student in mathematics education at the University of Colorado in Boulder. “Likewise, someone who studies ergonomic design might be doing a STEM job, even thought there might be no chemistry involved.”

Looking at STEM as its own field, “the intersection of a set of activities and skills that we previously considered as distinct,” instead of relying on our historical understanding of specific jobs and disciplines, “is where STEM education gets exciting,” he says.

“Just about every career, from law enforcement to health care, includes a lot more STEM than before,” says Mark Grayson, executive director of STEM learning at Six Red Marbles, an educational publishing and learning design company based in Baltimore.

Emphasizing the need for early, excellent STEM education, he reiterates the point that it’s not about drilling kids in facts. By the time kids start working, Grayson says they’ll need to use their education to “solve a problem that didn’t exist when they went to school. Some of the fastest-growing (and best-
paying) careers in the next few decades are expected to be in fields like biomedical engineering, software development and medical technology.”

Linda P. Rosen, CEO of Change the Equation (CTEq), an organization dedicated to translating STEM needs into educational action, whose members include major corporations like 3M, Microsoft, and Xerox, says that the organization’s definition of a STEM-specific job includes computer, architecture, engineering, and physical science occupations, but also “healthcare and management occupations that require strong STEM skills,” such as information systems managers or healthcare practitioners.

“The fastest-growing fields,” she notes, “are also the fields reporting the greatest shortages. Many CTEq companies report a shortage of engineers, often those with specialized training. Companies that require security clearance — which at a minimum requires U.S. citizenship — report STEM shortages at all education levels.”

With the U.S. ranked 52nd in STEM education, and Americans losing interest in pursuing these fields, it really does look like our kids’ education is not preparing them for the future.

**Bridging the gap**

Answering the question of why American kids aren’t ending up in STEM fields is more complex than you might think.

“First, most schools do nothing with the technology and engineering parts of STEM,” says Mark Grayson. “Second, the learning model is very passive and based on regurgitation of facts.” This is opposed to what he calls a more active model, which emphasizes critical thinking and “the ability to figure out what you need to teach yourself to solve a real-world problem.” Learning passively also “gives math and science an undeserved reputation of being boring and hard.”

It’s not only poor curricula in individual subjects, says Raymond Johnson, but the lack of hands-on experience and a failure to integrate individual STEM disciplines, which would require different models both of teacher preparation and how schools are structured. The best model he’s seen, he says, is the Nature, Life, Technology (NLT) curriculum from the Netherlands. “The samples I’ve seen are fascinating, integrating physics, mathematics, earth science, chemistry, and other disciplines. But most high schools and middle schools in the U.S. don’t have that kind of schedule flexibility, nor do we have teachers with expertise across STEM disciplines.”

Mark Grayson agrees, bringing up compartmentalization as a problem in the current school model.

“Math instruction is over here in this room with this teacher, science is handled over there with that teacher, and rarely do the two meet. Even within science, biology is one thing and physics is another.”
Maria Zacharias of the National Science Foundation points to the work of Robert Tai at the University of Virginia, whose extensive research in K-12 STEM education highlights the importance of early exposure to science. Tai’s best-known longitudinal study tracked students from eighth grade through graduate school and found that, in many STEM fields, students’ early interest in science led them to careers or graduate work in those fields. “If they form interest [by eighth grade],” says Zacharias, “they are more likely to be scientists. If not, it’s hard to get them back.”

Building skills and momentum

The other side of the equation is the lack of in-depth knowledge and training, what some call rigorous learning.

“A good learning experience should make you think, and teach you something you’ll remember and use again,” says Grayson. “The word ‘rigor’ sums this up.”

But rigor is not the only way to describe the quality of educational activities, says Raymond Johnson. ‘Authentic”might be a better choice. “When students do laboratory work to test their own understanding about how something works, and to refine their knowledge, then we’re more closely resembling the work of professional scientists.”

Another way to gauge quality is to think about “cognitive level” or “cognitive demand,” which requires students to “do the mental ‘heavy lifting’ of evaluating a problem and choosing their own solution strategy.”

Giving students a deep bedrock of scientific experience is crucial because early interest, even passion, isn’t always enough. What very few people are willing to admit is that actual scientific work can be tedious and boring.

The onus is on educators and parents to ensure enthusiasm and deep engagement so that later, repetitive work won’t deter students from pursuing STEM fields.

Engineering a working curriculum

How does all of this translate to the classroom?

“At the elementary age,” says Grayson, “a great thing to do is to link engineering with play. Who can build a bridge out of blocks that will hold the most weight? Who can make the paper airplane that flies the fastest or the highest or the farthest? Who can explain why that bridge or airplane worked? Who can figure out how to make one that’s even better?”

Penny Dowdy, a curriculum specialist at Six Red Marbles, demonstrates the kind of deep learning that can happen through just one fourth-grade Common Core mathematics standard.

“A teacher could provide local bus schedules and have students calculate how long it would take to get between destinations, time of arrival, what time they should leave one location to make a transfer, distance traveled, etc. This would hit the ‘use operations to solve word problems involving distances, intervals of time …’ The teacher could provide specific word problems to solve, and then he or she could have students develop their own problems by planning bus trips to destinations that interest them.”
Crucially, Dowdy says, "the activity itself gives students a reason to use math in a practical, real-world way so students aren’t wondering when they would ever use these skills."

At older ages, the question becomes how to maintain momentum in these areas, and provide a solid foundation for scientific practice and methods.

“By high school,” says Mark Grayson, “a project can involve solving science and engineering challenges in the community using hand-held data recorders. This allows for the learning to link to social studies and other fields as well. Examples include testing local watersheds, monitoring migrating butterflies, identifying acoustic ‘dead spots’ in the auditorium, or analyzing the hot and cold spots in a building.”

The STEM School (recently renamed the Nikola Tesla STEM High School) in Redmond’s Lake Washington school district has taken this kind of learning to heart, enrolling its students in internships to “tackle real-world problems.” One group recently presented work on a solar light tower project they completed with the guidance of engineers from Genie, a company that manufactures equipment for the construction industry.

Raymond Johnson also sees that some of the solutions to our STEM problems might be found in skills and practices that have been devalued over the last few decades. When he worked as a teacher, he taught at one school “with a very successful construction program in which, each year, the students would build a house.” The sale of the house paid for the program, plus the graduates were prepared for employment in construction work.

“The STEM skills and occupations of the future may look different, but I think we can learn from these kinds of apprenticeship models of education that have worked well with skilled trades.”

The future of STEM education will ideally bring together all of these practices, crossing curricular boundaries to tap into young students’ thirst for exploration, allowing plenty of time for in-depth learning, and creating opportunities for increased hands-on practice. In that space we’ll find our future engineers, mathematicians, biologists, programmers, inventors, and so much more.

Learn more

There is a dizzying array of programs all over the country dedicated to improving both the quality and experience of U.S. STEM education.

The NIH’s Science Education Partnerships (SEPA) grant program currently supports 67 active projects nationwide, such as Seattle-based BioQuest, which offers half-day programs and internships for high-schoolers interested in learning about global health or medical research. The SEPA website allows you to easily search for programs by state.

The NIH also provides curriculum supplements for teachers on a wide array of subjects.

Change the Equation’s STEMworks programs seek to encourage active, hands-on learning at all grade levels.

Washington STEM drives innovation and improvement in STEM education by investing in teacher training, building networks of STEM professionals and educators and advocating for important policy changes.

Are book clubs the wave of the future at work?

By Rex Huppke

Chicago TribuneOctober 28, 2014

Turns out, reading at work can be good for employees and the workplace.

It dawned on me recently that reading is not an activity that’s often associated with work. It’s more of a leisure-time endeavor, which is fine — but if it’s so darn good for us to read, why shouldn’t reading be a part of the working world?

I’m not talking about co-workers starting a book club, but rather companies encouraging all employees to read certain books. Maybe even launching discussions about those books or using them to drive home aspects of the company’s culture.

“I think it really applies to the workplace and the kind of environments we want to create,” said Ben Eubanks, a human resources analyst at Brandon Hall Group and an advocate for workplace reading. “One of the things that I like best is when you read it and I read it, and then we get together and talk about it. The discussion that happens afterward. If you’re sitting in a PowerPoint presentation, I’m telling you things and you’re taking things in but there’s really no discussion.”

He thinks reading should be an expected part of any employee’s performance. It could range from books that management picks for all workers to read — ones that get at the company’s core philosophies — to books that managers suggest for specific employees, with an eye toward helping make the employee better.

“I’ve worked with managers in the past to assign them a book that we think will help them learn the things they need to learn or develop a skill they’re not being exposed to,” Eubanks said. “People who are successful are often crazy about reading. They make time for that because they understand how important it is, and it’s kind of like a secret weapon.”

A growing nonprofit program called Books@Work is finding that the books workers read don’t have to just be about the workplace. Wading into literature can go a long way toward expanding minds and bringing colleagues closer together.

The Cleveland-based program — now operating in five states — finds professors from nearby colleges and universities to lead workplace literature seminars. Workers who participate will read a book or a series of short stories each month and, as a group, meet weekly with the professor. Ideally, this will continue for up to six months, with different professors handling different books.

“We have really had fun taking this program to different places, and so far we haven’t found a sector that it doesn’t work in,” said Ann Kowal Smith, the program’s founder and executive director. “What we’ve learned is that we’re affecting people, affecting the companies and having an impact on society as these employees bring home the books and talk about them with their children and families.”
Smith said the Books@Work program was implemented with administrators at a company that had been through a series of mergers and acquisitions. The merging of different work cultures and management styles had caused some problems.

The administrators read the book “Snow Falling on Cedars” by David Guterson, which deals with the looming post-World War II distrust between white residents and the Japanese-American community.

“That book enabled them to have conversations about what it’s like to be the ‘us’ and the ‘them’ in a merger,” Smith said. “The conversations were richer as a result of that.”

So even if the book is fiction, the subject matter can lead to discussions about the workplace and examinations of how themes in the novels or short stories relate to a company, its people or its culture.

“When you open people up to fiction and poetry and short stories, you open up the aperture to what issues they can talk about,” Smith said. “The book is an entree for people to realize that their life experiences are, in and of themselves, a form of expertise. They can tackle issues together and build on each other’s ideas. Literature opens up conversations so much more than a management book does.”

That doesn’t mean it’s bad or ineffective to encourage workers to read management books that tie in with the skills and ideals a company is trying to foster. But by looking beyond just business books, you might foster unexpected connections or create a deeper understanding among different people.

If you want to learn more about Smith’s program, go to booksatwork.org.

And if you want to try introducing literature into the workplace on your own, Smith has three pieces of advice:

• Pick a piece of literature that is “respectful, opening and inviting to perspective.” There are a number of examples of books used in the Books@Work seminars on the program’s website.

• If you can’t find a professor willing to help, make sure you have someone there to facilitate the discussions.

• Discourage people from talking about whether they liked or disliked the book. “I think that’s a fairly destructive conversation,” Smith said. “Sometimes we learn the most from the books we really wrestle with.” Get people to focus instead on characters or on the plot.

One of the nicest aspects of encouraging reading in the workplace is there’s no right or wrong path. You can experiment and see where people find value.

The worst that happens is you learn something. And I’m told that learning is good. Maybe even better than watching television.

Rex Huppke writes for the Chicago Tribune. Send him questions by email at rhuppke@tribune.com or on Twitter @RexWorksHere.
E-books Still Outsold by Hardcover and Paperback

Print formats outsell digital in the first half of 2014

By Jim Milliot | Sep 26, 2014

E-book sales accounted for 23% of unit sales in the first six months of 2014, according to Nielsen Books & Consumer’s latest survey of the nation’s book-buying behavior. Paperback remained the most popular format in the first half of the year, with a 42% share of unit sales. Hardcover’s share of units was just ahead of e-books, accounting for 25% of unit purchases.

Within the trade book category, adult fiction and the young adult categories both saw e-books take a 30% share of unit sales in the first half of 2014. E-books have been a significant part of adult fiction sales since the format first gained traction, but became a bigger part of the young adult category in 2012 with the success of the Hunger Games trilogy and related films. In 2014, the format has benefited from strong e-book sales in the Divergent series as well as John Green’s The Fault in Our Stars. E-book sales represented only 22% of unit sales in the adult nonfiction category in the six-month period and 13% of children’s sales, excluding young adult.

The Nielsen data also found that e-commerce outlets remained the largest sales channel in the January-to-June period. E-tailers, led of course by Amazon, had a 39% share of units, easily putting them ahead of bookstore chains, which had a 21% share. Mass merchandisers combined to account for 8% of units, as did book clubs and fairs. Independent bookstores had a 3% unit share in the period, according to the Nielsen survey. Among some of the major book categories, e-tailers’ share varied from a low of 25% of units in the children’s category to a high of 47% in the romance category. The high market share of romance sales through e-commerce sites no doubt reflects the higher percentage of romance titles that are bought as e-books. YA was the bestselling category at chains, while mysteries and adult nonfiction were tops at independent bookstores.

In the first half of 2014, 12% of book buyers said that they learned about the titles they purchased through in-store displays, pointing to the important role that bookstores play in discovery. The second most widely reported discovery method was similarly low-tech: 10% of consumers said that they heard about the books they purchased from friends and relatives. And 8% of the book buyers surveyed said that they
discovered the titles they purchased by browsing the websites of online retailers.

This edition of the Nielsen Books & Consumer survey focuses on sales of new books (both frontlist and backlist), but, unlike past surveys, it excludes used book sales—a switch that makes it difficult to provide trending with prior years.

AKRN NM CV

PW Picks: Books of the Week, October 6, 2014

Tor Books -- Science Fiction. Fantasy. The Universe.
Fans of print books, who have long lived in fear that their neighborhood bookstore will be rendered obsolete by the ubiquity of ebooks in a matter of years, can take comfort in new numbers from Nielsen Books & Consumer showing that ebooks were outsold by both hardcovers and paperbacks in the first half of 2014.

According to Nielsen’s survey, ebooks constituted only 23 percent of unit sales for the first six months of the year, while hardcovers made up 25 percent and paperback 42 percent of sales. In other words, not only did overall print book sales, at 67 percent of the market, outpace ebook sales, both hardcovers and paperbacks individually outsold ebooks.

Given the explosive growth of ebook sales since the launch of the Kindle in 2007, with increases in the triple digits for several years, many expected the paper book industry to remain in retreat for the foreseeable future. Recently, however, ebook gains seem to have stabilized with hardcover and paperback books still comfortably dominant. In 2013, sales growth for ebooks slowed to single digits, and the new numbers from Nielsen suggest the leveling off was no anomaly.

At Electric Literature, Lincoln Michel theorizes that this anticipates a future in which paper books and ebooks will coexist peacefully. This hope was also expressed to Publishers Weekly last year by industry insiders, including Perseus Books Group CEO David Steinberger, who commented that: "A healthy, diverse marketplace with multiple format, price point, and channel choices for the consumer is generally a positive for readers, authors, and publishers overall."

Author Stephen King told HuffPost Live recently that he also believes print books have a long and bright future ahead of them, saying, "I think books are going to be there for a long, long time to come." King compares books’ prospects positively with those of CDs and vinyl."[A]udio recordings of music have only been around for, I'm going to say, 120 years at the most," he said. "Books have been around for three, four centuries ... There's a deeply implanted desire and understanding and wanting of books that isn't there with music."

This continuing variety in format doesn’t only appeal to choice-conscious consumers. It may be a boon for those worried about the possible downsides of ereading, given growing, though still preliminary, evidence that print books may allow for deeper reading and stronger understanding and memory than digital books. Advocates of more engaged reading have often warned that the increasing omnipresence of ereading might erode our capacity to read deeply.

If the new trends continue, such warnings of the death of print books, and their potential benefits, may prove to have been greatly exaggerated.