Association for Rural and Small Libraries

Strategic Planning Meeting

Center for the Study of Rural Librarianship
Clarion University of Pennsylvania
Clarion, Pennsylvania

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Preliminary Readings

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Profile of Rural Public Libraries in the United States
The following data were compiled by
Bernard Vavrek, Center for the Study of Rural Librarianship, Clarion University

Source: Chute, A., Kroe. E., O'Shea, P., Polcari, M., and Ramsey, C.J.
Public Libraries in the United States: Fiscal Year 2001. (NCES 2003-399)
U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Washington, DC: 2003.

N.B.: The following data represent mean averages.
Included in the information for libraries serving <25,000 populations are also those of <2,500.

Public libraries serving populations <2,500	Public libraries serving populations <25,000
Of the 9,129 public libraries in the United States, 29% (2,662) serve populations up to 2,499.	*Of the 9,129 public libraries in the United States, 79% (7,177) serve populations up to 24,999.*
40% (416) of the (1041) libraries serving populations of <1000 are open 10-19 hours/week. *42% (680) of the (1621) libraries serving populations of 1,000-2,499 are open 20-29 hours/week.*	*35% (457) of the (1,305) libraries serving populations of 2,500-4,999 are open 30-39 hours/week.* *35% (505) of the (1,443) libraries serving populations of 5,000-9,999 are open 40-49 hours/week.* *31% (548) of the (1,767) libraries serving populations of 10,000-24,999 are open 50-59 hours/week.*
The total operating income is $36,000.	*The total operating income is $192,000.*
There is an average of <one paid FTE staff member for each library.	*There is an average of 5 paid FTE staff members for each library.*
6% (169) of the libraries have an ALA/MLS degreed librarian.	*31% (2232) of the libraries have an ALA/MLS degreed librarian.*
There are 11,196 books/serial volumes, and 30 serial subscriptions.	*There are 27,235 books/serial volumes, and 74 serial subscriptions.*
The average total circulation was 10,277 items.	*The average total circulation was 47,528 items.*
On an annual basis, there were 1,088 reference transactions.	*On an annual basis, there were 5,234 reference transactions.*
90% of the libraries have access to the Internet.	*95% of the libraries have access to the Internet.*
Of the total number of libraries, 79% have access to electronic services.	*Of the total number of libraries, 88% have access to electronic services.*

Association of Rural & Small Libraries
Membership Distribution

Alaska	1
California	15
Colorado	7
Connecticut	2
Delaware	4
Florida	3
Georgia	3
Hawaii	1
Illinois	13
Indiana	6
Iowa	5
Kansas	8
Kentucky	4
Louisiana	6
Maine	2
Maryland	1
Massachusetts	1
Michigan	12
Minnesota	4
Missouri	3
Montana	1
Nebraska	1
Nevada	1
New Hampshire	1
New York	6
North Carolina	1
North Dakota	2
Ohio	7
Oklahoma	2
Oregon	3
Pennsylvania	19
South Carolina	6
Tennessee	2
Texas	1
Utah	2
Vermont	2
Virginia	6
Washington	14
West Virginia	2
Canada	6

Students

Clarion	49
Illinois	1
Maryland	1
New South Wales	1
North Dakota	1
Vermont	1

MEMBERS ARE IN 39 STATES

Pennsylvania	19
California	15
Washington	14
Illinois	13
Michigan	12
Kansas	8
Colorado	7
Ohio	7
Indiana	6
Louisiana	6
New York	6
South Carolina	6
Virginia	6
Iowa	5
Delaware	4
Kentucky	4
Minnesota	4
Florida	3
Georgia	3
Missouri	3
Oregon	3
Connecticut	2
Maine	2
North Dakota	2
Oklahoma	2
Tennessee	2
Utah	2
Vermont	2
West Virginia	2
Alaska	1
Hawaii	1
Maryland	1
Massachusetts	1
Montana	1
Nebraska	1
Nevada	1
New Hampshire	1
North Carolina	1
Texas	1
Canada	6
TOTAL	**186**
Students	54
TOTAL	**240**

20 Clues to Rural Community Survival

Clues to Rural Community Survival. Vicki Luther & Milan Wall.
Heartland Center for Leadership Development, 1987; 1998.

1. **Evidence of Community Pride:** Successful communities are often showplaces of care, attention, history and heritage.
2. **Emphasis on Quality in Business and Community Life:** People believe that something worth doing is worth doing right.
3. **Willingness to Invest in the Future:** In addition to the brick-and-mortar investments, all decisions are made with an outlook on the future.
4. **Participatory Approach to Community Decision Making:** Even the most powerful of opinion leaders seem to work toward building consensus.
5. **Cooperative Community Spirit:** The stress is on working together toward a common goal, and the focus is on positive results.
6. **Realistic Appraisal of Future Opportunities:** Successful communities have learned how to build on strengths and minimize weaknesses.
7. **Awareness of Competitive Positioning:** Local loyalty is emphasized, but thriving communities know who their competitors are and position themselves accordingly.
8. **Knowledge of the Physical Environment:** Relative location and available natural resources underscore decision-making.
9. **Active Economic Development Program:** There is an organized, public/private approach to economic development.
10. **Deliberate Transition of Power to a Younger Generation of Leaders:** People under 40 regularly hold key positions in civic and business affairs.
11. **Acceptance of Women in Leadership Roles:** Women are elected officials, plant managers, and entrepreneurial developers.
12. **Strong Belief in and Support for Education:** Good schools are the norm and centers of community activity.
13. **Problem-Solving Approach to Providing Health Care:** Health care is considered essential, and smart strategies are in place for diverse methods of delivery.
14. **Strong Multi-Generational Family Orientation:** The definition of family is broad, and activities include younger as well as older generations.
15. **Strong Presence of Traditional Institutions that are Integral to Community Life:** Churches, schools and service clubs are strong influences on community development and social activities.
16. **Sound and Well-Maintained Infrastructure:** Leaders work hard to maintain and improve streets, sidewalks, water systems, and sewage facilities.
17. **Careful Use of Fiscal Resources:** Frugality is a way of life and expenditures are considered investments in the future.
18. **Sophisticated Use of Information Resources:** Leaders access information that is beyond the knowledge base available in the community.
19. **Willingness to Seek Help from the Outside:** People seek outside help for community needs, and many compete for government grants and contracts for economic and social programs.
20. **Conviction that, in the Long Run, You Have to Do It Yourself:** Thriving rural communities believe their destiny is in their own hands. Making their communities good places is a pro-active assignment, and they willingly accept it.

Understanding Communities and their Dynamics

Rural Communities: Legacy and Change 2nd ed. Cornelia Butler & Jan A. Flora. Westview Press, 2004.

The Floras define "community" as a place or location in which people interact for mutual benefit. The community need not provide all the services individuals require and may not necessarily offer community members s common sense of identity.

Their book assumes that social issues can be explained in terms of a community's history and the resulting capitals that are available to that community. Economic and policy choices made at the state and federal level and individual choices made by the communities themselves mean that, even for poor, remote rural communities, **trend is not destiny**.
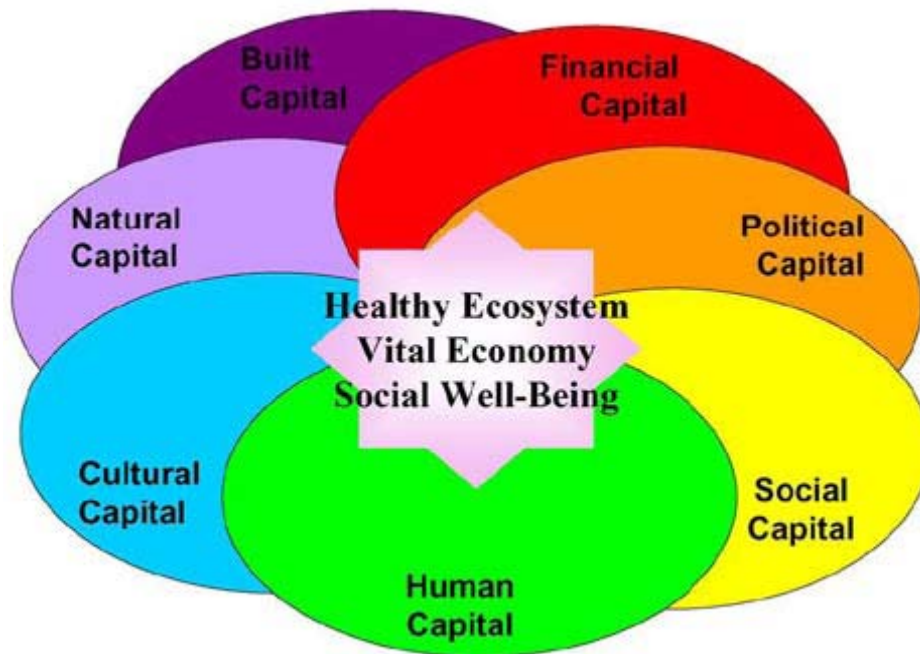
The intangible capitals are the unseen assets that community members possess, both individually and corporately.

Human capital consists of the knowledge, skills, and abilities of individual community members and how those individual assets can be invested into the community as a whole.
Cultural capital includes the general values and attitudes held by a community, including the way they tend to approach life in general.
Political capital is generally thought of as the amount of power a community has to determine the availability of resources and influence the distribution of those resources.
Social capital is comprised of the social networks and the amount of collaboration found among community members as well as between communities. A key component of social capital is mutual trust.

The tangible capitals are the visible assets that a community possesses.

Financial capital primarily consists of money that is used for investment into the community rather than for individual consumption. An important part of financial capital is its ability to be translated into other assets such as *built capital*.
Built capital is comprised of the assets that have been constructed in and around the community. Roads, bridges, public services, and buildings are all part of a community's built capital. This provides a foundation for community development and growth.
Natural capital includes the natural resources found in and around a community: landscape, water, flora, and fauna all are part of a community's natural capital.
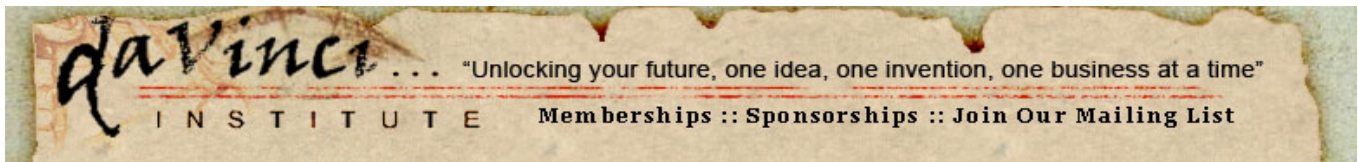
The Future of Libraries
Beginning the Great Transformation
Thomas Frey, Executive Director of the DaVinci Institute

In 1519 Leonardo daVinci died and left behind one of the world's largest collections of art comprised of well over 5,000 drawings, sketches, and paintings, the vast majority of which the general public would not become aware of until over 400 years later.

The largest portion of this collection was left in the hands of Francesco Melzi, a trusted assistant and favorite student of Leonardo. Sixty years later when Melzi died in 1579 the collection began a lengthy, and often destructive, journey.

In 1630 a sculptor at the court of the King of Spain by the name of Pompeo Leoni began a very sloppy process of rearranging the collections, sorting the artistic drawings from the technical ones with scientific notations. He split up the original manuscripts, cut and pasted pages and created two separate collections. Some pieces were lost.

In 1637 the collections were donated to Biblioteca Ambrosiana, the library in Milan, where they remained until 1796 when Napoleon Bonaparte ordered the manuscripts to be transferred to Paris. Much of the collection "disappeared" for the next 170 year until it was rediscovered in 1966 in the archives of the National Library of Madrid.

Libraries played a significant role in the preservation of the da Vinci collection and we often wonder about other brilliant people in history who didn't have libraries to preserve their work. Some we will never know about.

Archive of Information

Throughout history the role of the library was to serve as a storehouse, an archive of manuscripts, art, and important documents. The library was the center of information revered by most because each contained the foundational building blocks of information for all humanity.

In medieval times, books were valuable possessions far too expensive for most people to own. As a result, libraries often turned into a collections of lecterns with books chained to them.

In 1455 Johann Gutenberg unveiled his printing press to the world by printing copies of the Gutenberg Bible. Later Gutenberg had his printing press repossessed by Johann Fust, the man who had financed his work for the previous 10 years. The sons of Johann Fust were largely responsible for a printing revolution that saw over 500,000 books put into circulation before 1500.

A huge turning point in the evolution of libraries was architected by Andrew Carnegie. Between 1883 and 1929 he provided funding for 2,509 libraries, of which 1,689 of them were built in the US.

Leading up to today libraries have consisted of large collections of books and other materials, primarily funded and maintained by cities or other institutions. Collections are often used by people who choose not to, or can not afford to, purchase books for themselves.

But that definition is changing.

Beginning the Transition

We have transitioned from a time where information was scarce and precious to today where information is vast and readily available, and in many cases, free.

People who in the past visited libraries to find specific pieces of information are now able to find that information online. The vast majority of people with specific information needs no longer visit libraries. However, others who read for pleasure as example, still regularly patronize their local library.

Setting the Stage

We have put together ten key trends that are affecting the development of the next generation library. Rest assured that these are not the only trends, but ones that have been selected to give clear insight into the rapidly changing technologies and equally fast changing mindset of library patrons.

Trend #1 - Communication systems are continually changing the way people access information

Communication systems have been rapidly evolving. If you were to construct a trend line beginning with the 1844 invention of the telegraph, you will begin to see the accelerating pace of change: 1876 – telephone, 1877 – phonograph, 1896 – radio, 1935 – fax machine, 1939 – television, 1945 – ENIAC Computer, 1947 – transistor, 1954 – color television, 1961 – laser, 1965 – email, 1973 – cell phone, 1974 – Altair 8800, 1989 – World Wide Web, 1990 – Online Search Engine, 1992 – Web Browser, 1994 – Palm Pilot, 1996 – Google, 1999 – P2P, 2002 – iPod, 2004 – Podcasting.

Certainly there are many more points that can be added to this trend line, but as you think through the direction we're headed, there is one obvious question to consider. What is the ultimate form of communication, and will we ever get there?

While we are not in a position to know the "ultimate form" of communication, it would be a safe bet that it is not writing and reading books. Books are a technology, and writing is also a technology, and every technology has a limited lifespan.

Trend #2 - All technology ends.   All technologies commonly used today will be replaced by something new.

Media formats are continually disappearing. The 8-track tape was replaced by the cassette tape, which in turn was replaced by the CD, which is currently in the process of disappearing altogether.

The telephone industry has gone from the dial phone, to push button phone, to cordless phones, to cell phones, to some sort of universal PDA, cell phone, music player, satellite radio, game machine device that will be totally unrecognizable by today's standards. Eventually the cell phone device will disappear. We don't need to see technology to interact with it.

In a similar fashion, every device, tool, piece of hardware, equipment, and technology that we are using today will go away, and be replaced by something else. That something else will be faster, smarter, cheaper, more capable, more durable, work better, and look cooler than anything we have today.

Trend #3 - We haven't yet reached the ultimate small particle for storage. But soon.

We live in an awkward time where technological advances related to information storage are quite routine and expected. Each new breakthrough barely raises an eyebrow because they happen so often. However, Moore's Law will not go on indefinitely.

There are physical limits to how small we can make storage particles. Within the coming years, advances will slow and eventually stop altogether as we transition from our grand pursuit of tiny-ness to other areas of information efficiencies such as speed, reliability, and durability.

Once we conquer the ultimate small storage particle, we will be able to set standards – both standards for information and standards for storage. This becomes extremely important as we try to envision the stable information base of the future, and the opportunities for libraries to interact with it and build new and exciting "information experiences".

But perhaps the most critical component of stabilizing information storage will surround the issues of findability.

Trend #4 - Search Technology will become increasingly more complicated

Many people today think our present day search technology is fairly simple, and it is. But the simple search days are numbered.

The vast majority of today's search industry is based on text search. Text search is being expanded to cover the various languages of the world and some forms of image, audio, and video search are currently in place. However, next generation search technology will include the ability to search for such attributes as taste, smell, texture, reflectivity, opacity, mass, density, tone, speed, and volume.

As we achieve the ability to conduct more and more complicated searches, the role of the librarian to assist in finding this kind of information also becomes more and more important. People will not have the time and skills necessary to keep up on each new innovation in the search world, and they will need a competent professional to turn to.

Trend #5 - Time compression is changing the lifestyle of library patrons

The spectrum of human need is continually expanding. The paradigm of "need" is changing, evolving, and most importantly, speeding up. Time compression is affecting nearly every aspect of our lives, but as we compress our time, we are also compressing our needs.

People today sleep, on average, two hours less per night than 80 years ago, going from 8.9 hours per night to 6.9 hours. 34% of lunches today are eaten on the run. 66% of young people surf the web & watch TV at the same time. In a recent survey, 43% of the people in our society are having trouble making decisions because of sheer data overload.

Basically, we have more needs faster.

So as the spectrum of human need grows, the opportunities for libraries to meet these needs is also growing. However, "needs" are a moving target, so the library of the future will need to be designed to accommodate the changing needs of its constituency. One of the needs that will be going away is the need to use keyboards.

Trend #6 - Over time we will be transitioning to a verbal society

Keyboards remain as our primary interface between people and electronic information even though inventors have long felt there must be a better way. The days of the keyboard are numbered. As mentioned earlier, all technology ends and soon we will be witnessing the end of the keyboard era.

Dr William Crossman, Founder/Director of the CompSpeak 2050 Institute for the Study of Talking Computers and Oral Cultures, predicts that as we say goodbye to keyboards we will begin the transition to a verbal society. He also predicts that by 2050 literacy will be dead.

While the accuracy of his dates and the wholesale transition from literacy to a verbal society may be debatable, there will undoubtedly be a strong trend towards verbal information. Computers will become more human-like with personalities, traits, and other characteristics that will give us the sense of being in a room with other humans.

Trend #7 - The demand for global information is growing exponentially

Many secrets in tomorrow's business world lie in the writings of people who did not speak English or any of the other prominent global languages. A company's ability to do business in a foreign country will be largely dependent upon their ability to understand the culture, society, and systems within which that country operates.

The National Intelligence Council predicts "the globalization of labor markets, and political instability and conflict will fuel a dramatic increase in the global movement of people through 2015 and beyond. Legal and illegal migrants now account for more than 15 percent of the population in more than 50 countries. These numbers will grow substantially and will increase social and political tension and perhaps alter national identities even as they contribute to demographic and economic dynamism."

Our ability to learn about and understand the cultures of the rest of the world are key to our ability to prepare ourselves for the global societies of the future. At the same time that we learn about global societies, a new era of global systems will begin to emerge.

Trend #8 - The Stage is being set for a new era of Global Systems

Most people don't think in terms of global systems, but we have many existing systems that have evolved over centuries that now play a significant role in our lives.

Our present global systems include international trade, global sea transportation, the Metric System, global news services, global mail systems, time zones, global air transportation, and global stock trading. Two of the newest global systems include the GPS system and the Internet.

Few people think in terms of global systems and what they represent. But as we move towards more homogenized cultures and societies, the need for creating cross-border systems will also increase.

Examples of future global systems include global accounting standards for publicly traded companies, global intellectual property systems, global tax code, global currency, global ethics standards, and an official earth measurement system. People will begin to develop these new global systems because each one represents a multi-billion dollar opportunity just from the sheer efficiencies created along the way.

Libraries will play a key role in the development of global systems because they will be charged with archiving and disseminating the foundational pieces of information necessary for the new systems to take root. Libraries themselves are a global system representing an anchor point for new systems and new cultures.

Trend #9 - We are transitioning from a product-based economy to an experience based economy

As the world's population ages and the Baby Boom generation approaches retirement, many of them will begin to shed their belongings to create a more free and mobile lifestyle. Each item that a person owns demands their attention, and the accumulation of physical goods to demonstrate a person's wealth is rapidly declining in importance. Experience becomes the key.

How would you rate your last library experience? Chances are that you've never been asked that question. However, in the future, the patron experience will become a key measurement criteria.

Gone are the days of the solemn book-reading experience in the neighborhood library. Activities will be diverse and varied as a way of presenting and interacting with information in new and unusual formats.

But more importantly, books themselves will transition from a product to an experience. As books change in form from simple "words on a page" to various digital manifestations of the information, future books will be reviewed and evaluated by the experience they create.

Trend #10 - Libraries will transition from a center of information to a center of culture

With the emergence of distributed forms of information the central role of the library as a repository of facts and information is changing. While it is still important to have this kind of resource, it has proven to be a diminishing draw in terms of library traffic.

The notion of becoming a cultural center is an expansive role for the future library. It will not only serve as an information resource, but much more, with the exact mission and goals evolving and changing over time.

A culture-based library is one that taps into the spirit of the community, assessing priorities and providing resources to support the things deemed most important. Modern day cultural centers include museums, theaters, parks, and educational institutions. The library of the future could include all of these, but individual communities will be charged with developing an overall strategy that reflects the identity and personality of its own constituency.

Recommendations for Libraries

Libraries are in a unique position. Since most people have fond memories of their times growing up in libraries, and there are no real "library hater" organizations, most libraries have the luxury of time to reinvent themselves.

The role of a library within a community is changing. The way people interact with the library and the services it offers is also changing. For this reason we have put together a series of recommendations that will allow libraries to arrive at their own best solutions.

1)   **Evaluate the library experience.** Begin the process of testing patron's opinions, ideas, thoughts, and figure out how to get at the heart of the things that matter most in your community. Survey both the community at large and the people who walk through the library doors.

2)   **Embrace new information technologies.** New tech products are being introduced on a daily basis and the vast majority of people are totally lost when it comes to deciding on what to use and what to stay away from. Since no organization has stepped up to take the lead in helping the general public understand the new tech, it becomes a perfect opportunity for libraries. Libraries need to become a resource for as well as the experts in each of the new technologies.

   a. Create a technology advisory board and stay in close communication with them.
   b. Recruit tech savvy members of the community to hold monthly discussion panels where the community at large is invited to join in the discussions.
   c.   Develop a guest lecture series on the new technologies.

3)   **Preserve the memories of your own communities.** While most libraries have become the document archive of their community, the memories of a community span much more than just documents. What did it sound like to drive down Main Street in 1950? What did it smell like to walk into Joe's Bakery in the early mornings of 1965? Who are the people in these community photos and why were they important? Memories come in many shapes and forms. Don't let yours disappear.

4)   **Experiment with creative spaces so the future role of the library can define itself.** Since the role of the library 20 years from now is still a mystery, we recommend that libraries put together creative spaces so staff members, library users, and the community at large can experiment and determine what ideas are drawing attention and getting traction. Some possible uses for these creative spaces include:

    a.   Band practice rooms
    b.   Podcasting stations
    c.   Blogger stations
    d.   Art studios
    e.   Recording studios
    f.   Video studios
    g.   Imagination rooms
    h.   Theater-drama practice rooms

We have come a long ways from the time of daVinci and the time when books were chained to lecterns. But we've only scratched the surface of many more changes to come. Writing the definitive history of modern libraries is a work in progress. Our best advice is to enjoy the journey and relish in the wonderment of what tomorrow may bring.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Thomas Frey is the Executive Director and Senior Futurist at the DaVinci Institute where he has developed original research studies, enabling him to speak on unusual topics, translating trends into unique opportunities.

Tom continually pushes the envelope of understanding, creating fascinating images of the world to come. His talks on futurist topics have captivated people ranging from high level of government officials to executives in Fortune 100 companies including NASA, IBM, AT&T, Hewlett-Packard, Lucent Technologies, First Data, Boeing, Ford Motor Company, Qwest, Allied Signal, Hunter Douglas, Direct TV, Capital One, National Association of Federal Credit Unions, and many more. Because of his work inspiring inventors and other revolutionary thinkers, the Boulder Daily Camera has referred to him as the "Father of Invention". The Denver Post and Seattle Post Intelligence have referred to him as the "Dean of Futurists".

Before launching the DaVinci Institute, Tom spent 15 years at IBM as an engineer and designer where he received over 270 awards, more than any other IBM engineer.

ABOUT THE INSTITUTE: The future is yours if you have the keys - mentors, knowledge, skills, contacts, and funding. The DaVinci Institute is a non-profit futurist think tank based in the fertile proving grounds inside the innovation corridor of Colorado.

We are both a global community of thinkers and doers, and a service organization that graduates competent entrepreneurs and powerful entrepreneurial businesses. We have seen the future and it is truly a magical place.

This article can be found at http://www.davinciinstitute.com/page.php?ID=120

Perceptions of Libraries and Information Resources (2005)

http://www.oclc.org/reports/2005perceptions.htm

Report Findings

. . . on Information Consumers' Perceptions and Habits

- Respondents use search engines to begin an information search (84 percent). One percent begin an information search on a libraryWeb site. (Part 1.2)

- Quality and quantity of information are top determinants of a satisfactory information search. Search engines are rated higher than librarians. (Part 2.6)

- The criterion selected by most information consumers to evaluate electronic resources is that the information is worthwhile. Free is a close second. Speed has less impact. (Parts 3.1 and 3.4)

- Respondents do not trust purchased information more than free information. The verbatim comments suggest a high expectation of free information. (Part 3.4)

- Library users like to self-serve. Most respondents do not seek assistance when using library resources. (Part 2.4)

- Library card holders use information resources more than non-card holders, and they are more favorably disposed to libraries than non-card holders. (Parts 1.1, 1.4 and 3.7)

- Age matters sometimes. Sometimes it doesn't. Responses are sometimes consistent across U.S. age groups, suggesting age-independent preferences and practices. Familiarity with e-mail is an example. In other areas, responses vary considerably by the age of the respondents. For example, young U.S. respondents are much less likely than those over 65 to agree librarians add value to the information search process. (Part 2.6 and all Parts)

- The survey results are generally consistent across the geographic regions surveyed. Responses from the United Kingdom showed the largest range of variations from other regions surveyed. (Part 5 and all Parts)

Report Findings
. . . on Libraries

- Information consumers use the library. They use the library less and read less since they began using the Internet. The majority of respondents anticipate their usage of libraries will be flat in the future. (Parts 1.1 and 3.7)

- Borrowing print books is the library service used most. (Part 2.1)

- "Books" is the library brand. There is no runner-up. (Part 3.8)

- Most information consumers are not aware of, nor do they use, most libraries' electronic information resources. (Parts 1 and 2)

- College students have the highest rate of library use and broadest use of library resources, both physical and electronic. (Parts 1 and Part 2)

- Only 10 percent of college students indicated that their library's collection fulfilled their information needs after accessing the libraryWeb site from a search engine.

- The majority of information consumers are aware of many library community services and of the role the library plays in the larger community. Most respondents agree the library is a place to learn. (Part 4.1)

- Comments from respondents provide clear directions for physical libraries: be clean, bright, comfortable, warm and well-lit; be staffed by friendly people; have hours that fit their lifestyles; and advertise services. Find ways to get material to people, rather than making them come to the library. (Appendix B)

. . . on Alternatives to Libraries

- Information consumers like to self-serve. They use personal knowledge and common sense to judge if electronic information is trustworthy. They cross-reference other sites to validate their findings. (Parts 3.2 and 3.5)

- Ninety percent of respondents are satisfied with their most recent search for information using a search engine. Satisfaction with the overall search experience has a strong correlation to the quality and quantity of information returned in the search process. (Part 2.6)

- People trust what they find using search engines. They also trust information from libraries. They trust them about the same. (Part 3.3)

- Search engines fit the information consumer's lifestyle better than physical or online libraries. The majority of U.S. respondents, age 14 to 64, see search engines as a perfect fit. (Part 3.7)

Full Report
available
at
www.publicagenda.org

LONG OVERDUE:
A FRESH LOOK AT PUBLIC ATTITUDES ABOUT
LIBRARIES IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Key findings from a report by **PUBLIC AGENDA**
supported by **AMERICANS FOR LIBRARIES COUNCIL**
and the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation**

Americans View Public Libraries as Not Only Relevant to the 21st Century, But Essential to Their Communities

Summary: The American people expect and prize public library service in the Internet age. In fact, they see libraries as potential solutions to many communities' most pressing problems, from universal access to computers to a safe place for teens. But the research suggest a troubling "perception" gap, with many elected leaders reluctant to consider libraries a funding priority, and community residents – even those most appreciative of the library – unaware that libraries face stiff competition for funds. This spells a missed opportunity for elected leaders, who could build upon libraries' currency in the community to address a host of contemporary problems, as well as for the library community, which could better secure libraries' funding future by trumpeting the many traditional and innovative roles libraries play today.

Long Overdue is based on telephone interviews with a national random sample of 1,203 adults 18 years and older. Of those, 458 interviews were done with respondents who are civically engaged in the community in a number of ways, such as voting and volunteerism. Public Agenda also conducted 34 in-depth interviews with national and community leaders in politics, business, education, public health and library architecture to share their perspectives about the future of public libraries in America, as well as focus groups in six diverse communities across the nation.

Libraries Hold High Credibility in their Communities

→ Libraries receive the best grades of any of the community institutions covered in this study, with four in 10 giving them an 'A'.

→ Moreover, libraries seem to have escaped the public's general cynicism about government wasting taxpayer money. A majority of the public says their local libraries use money well. Even among people who rarely if ever use the local public library, a majority gives local libraries credit in this regard.

→ Most people say libraries perform an "essential" service in maintaining a productive community, and three-quarters say that if libraries were closed because of lack of funding, communities would lose something important and valuable.

The Public Values Both Traditional and 21st Century Library Services

→ Asked what libraries' top priorities should be, Americans pointed most frequently to such traditional services as having enough books for children, good reference materials, and friendly, knowledgeable librarians.

→ At the same time, two-thirds say that having enough computers and online services should also be a high priority for their local library.

Libraries: Essential to *Whole* Community

If your public library were shut down tomorrow due to lack of funding, would you feel that something essential and important has been lost, affecting the whole community, or that while something important was lost, it really only affects a few people in the community, or that the loss would not be important for your community?

Important loss to whole community - 78%
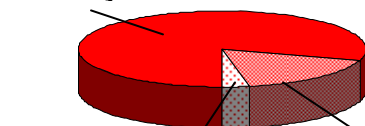
Not important - 3%

Only effects a few - 17%

→ Seven in 10 favor wiring libraries so that those who might not be able to afford home computers can learn computer skills and get online.

Civically Engaged: Strong on Libraries, But Not Called to Action

→ Americans who are active in their communites and vote regularly in local elections are also more likely to have a library card, favor taxes to support libraries and give them good grades for their services.

→ Although these highly engaged citizens are even more upbeat than others about libraries, they are no more likely to see the urgency of libraries being at risk for losing future public support.

→ The bottom line: The people that local politicians are most likely to listen to are also the most likely to be library supporters. But right now, they are generally unaware of possible threats to library services.

Library users and non-users alike say libraries use public monies well.

Do you believe that libraries use their money well, or do they spend it on the wrong things?

Use money well — 78%
66%

Misspend — 7%
7%

■ Library Users
▨ Non-Users

Don't know — 14%
27%
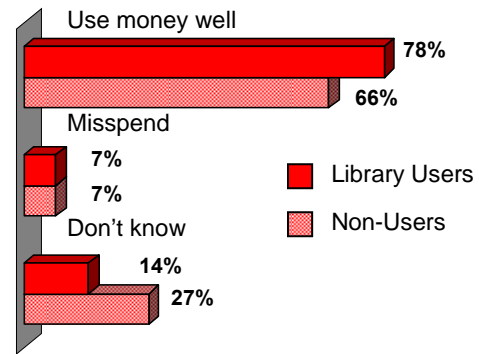
Leaders See Libraries as Poised to Solve Problems, But Vulnerable

→ Leaders recognize the potential of libraries to do far more in their communities than just provide access to information. Many point to specific examples of libraries that have made themselves indispensable to communities facing major challenges, such as building adult literacy and helping acculturate new immigrants.

→ At the same time, many leaders pointed out that libaries tend to fall to the bottom of the list when local decision makers are deciding their budgets.

Most People Reject Cutting Library Services and Are Receptive to Boosting Funding — if Libraries Make the Case

→ Faced with the prospect of local libraries in trouble, even non-users say they would raise taxes rather than cut back services or charge fees. Asked "If local libraries need additional funds to continue operation," increasing taxes to cover the necessary costs was the most popular answer (59% of library users, 47% of non-users) – ahead of "the library charging the people who use it" (26% library users, 35% non-users) or "the library reducing the service that it offers" (17% library users, 23% non-users). But since most Americans aren't aware of the funding challenge, libraries need to nurture this potential support and help translate it into action, the study suggests.

→ Because most Americans believe libraries use tax resources wisely, libraries do not have to fight the "cut the waste first" attitudes the public brings to so many issues of public funding.

→ There are several areas where the public sees opportunities for libraries to fill key gaps in their communities. These include: providing safe places for teens, ideally along with engaging activities; offering opportunities for adults to improve their reading skills; and serving as the "go to" place in the community, making it easier for residents to find government, health, and tax information.

Long Overdue: Americans Say Public Libraries Are Essential to 21st Century Communities

Americans for Libraries Council, June 13, 2006

Public Opinion Study Identifies Four Key Community Needs for Libraries to Take More Active Roles

New York -- Americans prize public library service in the Internet Age, a new research report released today by the nonpartisan public opinion research organization Public Agenda concludes. As local communities and states contend with tight budget constraints for public services, the public sees libraries as potential solutions to many communities' most pressing problems, from universal access to computers to the need for better options for keeping teens safe and productive.

"**Long Overdue: A Fresh Look at Public Attitudes About Libraries in the 21st Century**" reports the results of a national study of the general public as well as interviews with national and local civic leaders (see methodology below). This multi-level public opinion study identifies a troubling issue for library advocates: While Americans give their public libraries an "A" more often than any other community service asked about (45% give libraries an "A") and a large majority of the public (71%) says their local library uses public money well, few Americans are aware of the increasingly tenuous financial picture faced by many libraries.

Most Americans say that if their library shut down because of lack of funding they would feel "that something essential and important has been lost, affecting the whole community" (78%) In contrast, just 17% said "while something important was lost, it really only affects a few people in the community" and only 3% said "the loss would not be important."

Four areas of opportunity resonated most with the public and leaders alike: (1) providing stronger services for teens, (2) helping address illiteracy and poor reading skills among adults, (3) providing ready access to information about government services, including making public documents and forms readily available and (4) providing even greater access to computers for all.

The research was conducted by Public Agenda with support from the Americans for Libraries Council with funding from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. For the full report go to
http://www.publicagenda.org/research/research_reports_details.cfm?list=99

"Libraries are clearly at the heart of the America's vision for communities into the future," said Public Agenda President Ruth A. Wooden. "This research provides substantial evidence that, even with the vast and increasing amount of information available on the Internet and more competition for public funding, Americans want public libraries to continue to play a vital role in communities."

"Libraries are poised to solve a number of urgent community problems," said Diantha Dow Schull, President of Americans for Libraries Council. "It is gratifying to see that libraries continue to meet public demand as information leaders in the digital age. Now we have an opportunity to build on that trust to expand the work libraries are

already doing to provide safe places for our teens; provide quality health information; expand access to technology; and so many other crucial community roles for the 21st century. The public support is there, and the library community is ready."

Valued, Well-Run Institutions

Libraries came out on top when the public assessed the performance of local institutions ranging from public schools and the police department to public parks and cultural activities. Forty-five percent give an "A" to their local community for maintaining well-run libraries, far ahead of even the other highest ranked community assets like parks (31%), public education (25%), healthcare (22%), public meeting places (21%) and well-maintained streets (19%). On which institutions do the best job in their communities, more Americans said libraries are doing an "excellent" job (31%) than the local police department (22%), public schools (18%), local media (12%) or local government (7%).

The American public has a clear sense of what is absolutely crucial in a local library for basic success. More than 8 in 10 Americans believe that keeping services free should be a very high priority. Having enough current books for children, enough reference materials, friendly, knowledgeable library staff, and good programs for children and teens are also considered absolute essentials for libraries.

Digital Age Destination

While Americans value basic library services, they also highly value and endorse the further development of libraries' Internet and other computer services. Almost two-thirds of Americans (64%) believe having enough computers and online services for people should be a "high priority" for their local library. In order to address the "digital divide," 63 percent favor wiring public libraries and schools over doing nothing (11%) or helping low-income families purchase computers and get internet access (18%).

Half (52%) the public gives their local library an "A" or "B" for having enough computers. Roughly a third (35%) report having visited the Internet site of a public library.

Americans' mandate for libraries' investment in computers and Internet access is particularly noteworthy given that most respondents are already "wired" at home or at work. On any given day, most of the public (8 in 10) have access to a computer at their workplace, school or home. But this does not seem to lessen their attachment to library's digital services –- one-third of those surveyed also said they have used the library themselves for internet access.

Those who think public libraries are primarily used by folks who can't afford bookstores and are becoming the information resources of last resort are clearly mistaken. Families with higher incomes are even more likely to use public libraries and the technology services they offer than low-income families.

Civically Active on Stand-by

The study assembled an over-sample of civically engaged people (see methodology) in order to understand how these locally active folks –- the people in every community who make things happen but who don't necessarily hold any official post -– think of libraries. These citizens, who nearly always vote in local elections and involve themselves in community activities, are big fans of libraries. Nearly three-quarters have a library card, compared to 59 percent of the rest of the survey sample, and they are more likely to give their local libraries good grades on a variety of dimensions. They are also more likely to favor increasing taxes to support libraries over other funding options.

While these highly engaged citizens are even more upbeat than others about their libraries, they are no more likely to believe their libraries are facing potential funding cutbacks. Forty-five percent of the civically engaged think their local government has not provided enough money and assistance to the public libraries in their communities, 42 percent think they have and 13 percent say they just don't know. This compares similarly to the general public (43%, 41% and 15% respectively). As major supporters of libraries and strongly opposed to both reductions in services or charging of fees, the research demonstrates that civically active group could well be potentially vocal, activated protesters should their local libraries encounter funding shortfalls.

Opportunities to Do More

In order to identify the most favorable potential opportunities for libraries to strengthen public support, Public Agenda asked the public about their priorities for urgent action in their communities and which areas they think government should be more effective but where current performance is relatively poor. Researchers explored the same terrain in the interviews with national and local leadership.

The public is very concerned about teenagers and feel that providing safe and productive activities for teens should be a high priority (72%) for their communities. This is also an area where the public potentially holds their local governments accountable as they believe local government both can and should do more for teens. In the public's reckoning, libraries can potentially fill the gap: 3 out of 4 Americans (74%) believe providing services for teens should be a high priority for libraries. Another major opportunity for libraries to fill community needs is with providing literacy and reading programs for adults, which many civic leaders tied to strengthening workforce skills and economic development. Sixty-eight percent of the public said adult literacy programs should be a high priority for the community, very few said it was something their community was doing a very good job of providing and a large majority (68%) said it should be a high priority for their local library.

Linking Vocalized Support to Financial Support

"**Long Overdue**" finds the greatest challenge for libraries today is not convincing the public of their worth -– in the present or for the future. The research substantiates libraries' community value, serving many needs today and continuing with the changing times. "But libraries cannot survive on accolades alone," the report concludes. "If they are to compete successfully for dwindling public dollars, if they are

to develop the community connections and visibility that they require to thrive, public libraries will need to look carefully at opportunities to showcase and strengthen their role in addressing serious problems in their own communities. Then they need to start speaking up and reaching out to the citizen soldiers who can help support and buttress this vital community institution."

Methodology: The findings in "Long Overdue" are based on telephone interviews with a national random sample of 1,203 adults 18 years and older. Of those, 458 interviews were done with respondents who were considered "community soldiers" or "civic influentials." Interviews were conducted between March 2 and March 14, 2006. The survey was preceded by seven focus groups in five communities and 34 in-depth interviews with a variety of national and community leaders. The margin of error is plus or minus three percentage points for the "community soldiers" portion of the sample. The margin of error is higher when comparing percentages across subgroups with smaller sample sizes.

Americans for Libraries Council is a nonprofit organization that works to keep libraries high on the national agenda and at the center of our communities. The council unites leaders from many sectors — academic, artistic, corporate, governmental, nonprofit and philanthropic — to build support for America's remarkable system of libraries. Through our program division, Libraries for the Future, we develop and oversee programs in more than 200 libraries in 23 states. Signature programs include EqualAccess Libraries, Family Place Libraries, Lifelong Access Libraries and the Gulf Coast Libraries Renewal Fund. www.americansforlibraries.org.

Public Agenda is a nonprofit organization dedicated to nonpartisan public policy research. Founded in 1975 by former U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus Vance and Daniel Yankelovich, the social scientist and author, Public Agenda is well respected for its influential public opinion surveys and balanced citizen education materials. Its mission is to inject the public's voice into crucial policy debates. Public Agenda seeks to inform leaders about the public's views and to engage citizens in discussing complex policy issues.

ALA American Library Association
Key Action Areas

ALA is committed to seven **Key Action Areas** as guiding principles for investment of energies and resources:

Diversity

Diversity is a fundamental value of the association and its members, and is reflected in its commitment to recruiting people of color and people with disabilities to the profession and to the promotion and development of library collections and services for all people.

Equitable Access to Information and Library Services

The Association advocates funding and policies that support libraries as great democratic institutions, serving people of every age, income level, location, ethnicity, or physical ability, and providing the full range of information resources needed to live, learn, govern, and work.

Education and Lifelong Learning

The association provides opportunities for the professional development and education of all library staff members and trustees; it promotes continuous, lifelong learning for all people through library and information services of every type.

Intellectual Freedom

Intellectual freedom is a basic right in a democratic society and a core value of the library profession. The American Library Association actively defends the right of library users to read, seek information, and speak freely as guaranteed by the First Amendment.

Advocacy for Libraries and the Profession

The association actively works to increase public awareness of the crucial value of libraries and librarians, to promote state and national legislation beneficial to libraries and library users, and to supply the resources, training and support networks needed by local advocates seeking to increase support for libraries of all types.

Literacy

The ALA assists and promotes libraries in helping children and adults develop the skills they need-the ability to read
and use computers-understanding that the ability to seek and effectively utilize information resources is essential in a global information society.

Organizational Excellence

The association is inclusive, effective and responsive to the needs of ALA members.

Proposed New
Public Library Service Responses
5 December 2006 DRAFT

http://plablog.org/2006/12/proposed-new-service-responses-draft.html

June Garcia and Sandra Nelson have reviewed all of the comments from the three open meetings during the 2006 Annual Conference and on the PLA Service Response blog and have identified seventeen new or revised service responses. They are listed below along with a brief description of the benefits that each service response provides to community residents. As the process continues, the service response descriptions will be expanded to include suggested target audiences, common library services and programs, required resources, and suggested measures for each.

Those of you who have been working with the PLA planning tools for a long time will note that the number of service responses or roles continues to increase. There were eight roles identified in Planning and Role-Setting for Public Libraries in 1987 and thirteen service responses identified in Planning for Results in 1998. There are seventeen service responses in the current proposed list, and the list may still grow. However, it is important to remember that there is no magic number of service responses that can be selected for a library. The number of service responses that a library can manage is dependent on the resources available to that library. Libraries with limited resources can only provide a few services well, while libraries with more extensive resources can provide a wider range of services effectively.

The Service Responses

Be Informed Citizens: Local, National, and World Affairs
Citizens will have the information they need to support and promote democracy, to fulfill their civic responsibilities at the local, state, and national levels, and to fully participate in community decision-making.

Build Successful Enterprises: Business and Non-Profit Support
Business owners and non-profit organization directors and their managers will have the tools they need to develop and maintain strong, viable organizations.

Connect to the Online World: Public Internet Access
Residents will have high-speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the Internet.

Create Young Readers: Emergent Literacy
Preschool children will have programs and services designed to ensure that they will enter school ready to learn to read, write, and listen.

Discover Your Heritage: Genealogy and Local History
Residents and visitors will have the resources they need to explore their heritage, to connect the past with the present through their family histories, and to understand the history and traditions of the community in which they live.

Express Creativity: Create and Share Content

Residents will have the services and support they need to express themselves by creating original print, video, audio, or visual content in a real-world or online environment.

Explore Our Community: Community Resources and Services

Residents will have a central source for information about the wide variety of programs, services, and activities provided by community agencies and organizations.

Get Fast Facts: Ready Reference

Residents will have someone to answer their questions on a wide array of topics of personal interest.

Learn to Find, Evaluate, and Use Information: Information Literacy

Residents will know when they need information to resolve an issue or answer a question and will have the skills to search for, locate, evaluate, and effectively use information to meet their needs.

Learn to Read and Write: Adult and Family Literacy

Adults will have the support they need to improve their literacy skills in order to meet their personal goals and fulfill their responsibilities as parents, citizens, and workers.

Make Career Choices: Job and Career Development

Teens and adults will have the skills and resources they need to identify career opportunities that suit their individual strengths and interests.

Make Informed Decisions: Health, Wealth, and Other Life Choices

Residents will have the resources they need to identify and analyze risks, benefits, and alternatives before making decisions that affect their lives.

Satisfy Curiosity: Lifelong Learning

Residents will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives.

Stimulate Imagination: Reading, Viewing and Listening for Pleasure

Residents who want materials to enhance their leisure time will find what they want when and where they want them and will have the help they need to make choices from among the options.

Succeed in School: Homework Help

Students will have the resources they need to succeed in school.

Visit a Comfortable Place: Public and Virtual Spaces

Residents will have safe and welcoming physical places to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support social networking.

Welcome to America: Services for New Immigrants

New immigrants will have information on citizenship, English Language Learning (ELL), employment, public schooling, health and safety, available social services, and any other topics that they need to participate successfully in American life.

Please let us know what you think! We will be accepting input until January 1 and will present a revised draft at the upcoming Midwinter Meeting.

ALA American Library Association

FROM: Leslie Burger, President

DATE: January 11, 2007

RE: Toward a National Library Agenda

I am very pleased to send you this discussion draft of **_Toward a National Agenda for Libraries._**

On December 10 and11, 2006, a small group of librarians, policy makers, information specialists and users gathered at the ALA Washington Office to discuss the need for an Agenda and develop specific recommendations for consideration by the library community.

During the meeting the participants
- identified important trends and issues to be considered in developing the Agenda
- discussed the scope of the Agenda
- identified broad thematic areas in which to develop specific recommendations
- developed language for the proposed Agenda
- agreed to a timeline for implementation

A detailed account of the discussion can be found on the NLA Wiki
http://wikis.ala.org/nationallibraryagenda/index.php/Main_Page

Now I'm asking ALA units as well as the broader library community to help shape this Agenda by reviewing this draft document and sending me a summary of your feedback. I understand that your agenda at Midwinter is filled with regular and new business but I hope you will take the time to consider the Agenda. Your comments are critical to our success.

Here are some questions to guide your discussion:
1   Are you willing to support the concept of a broadly stated National Library Agenda that can be translated into action at the local, state and federal levels?
2   What items, as outlined in the draft Agenda, are priorities for your unit/division? Provide additional Agenda items for consideration if they are not mentioned in the draft.
3   What actions would your unit/division take to address these Agenda items?

Based on the comments we receive at Midwinter, the National Library Agenda Task Force will modify the Agenda with the expectation of making it available in time for National Library Legislative Day on May 1 and 2, 2007. We would like to use the broad points of the Agenda to guide our message to legislators.

Thanks in advance for your participation. If you have any questions, please be sure to contact me at lburger@princetonlibrary.org.

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Discussion Draft
Toward a National Agenda for Libraries
January 2007

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A National Agenda for Libraries

From the establishment of the first library at Alexandria to the opening of the groundbreaking Seattle Public Library, libraries in the US and around the world serve an essential role in creating healthy and vital societies. Libraries are timeless, well-loved and highly regarded institutions.

However, as information technology moves forward at breathtaking speeds, continuously shattering our beliefs of what is possible and enabling us to find and use vast amounts of information, libraries -and by extension the people who work in them -are called upon to justify the very existence of their institution on our campuses, in our schools and in our community.

It's time set a bold and inspiring agenda for 21st century library service. An agenda that captures the imagination of those who fund libraries, fully meets the needs of all the constituencies we serve, and transforms the way in which people perceive our institutions. We need an agenda that is bold, easy to understand and that can be supported and implemented at the federal, state and local level.

Our goal is to have a clear, compelling, and positive National Agenda for our nation's libraries, an agenda that will provide a focus for activities for the years to come.

Developing an Agenda

ALA has the beginnings of an agenda in its mission:

> ***The American Library Association's mission** is to provide leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.*

We do that in many ways.

- In the national and international arena, through our work in upholding intellectual freedom, access to information and protecting the privacy of the millions of people who visit and use our libraries each year
- Through the work products of Council, ALA Committees, ALA Divisions, Roundtables and other organizational units that promote innovation, standards of excellence and best practices among the profession
- By our investment in training, educating and creating a diverse library workforce that is responsive to the needs of the communities we serve
- Through our advocacy efforts to support increased visibility for libraries, public awareness about the value we bring to our communities and legislation that supports our ability to provide service

The NLA planning group believes that the national agenda for libraries needs to contain a statement of what we want for the people who use our institutions. Following is a rough draft:

The American Public Deserves:

- *Friendly library service in modern, safe, accessible and inviting buildings.*
- *The ability to use a library days, evenings and weekends and to use a virtual library 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days per year.*
- *Library collections that are current, relevant and responsive to the interests of the community*
- *Library collections reflecting the languages of community members and students, including non-English languages, Braille, and closed captioned*
- *The guidance and assistance of skilled information professionals*
- *Access to library service in their schools, colleges, workplace, and communities*
- *Convenient, up-to-date, and unrestricted access to information in all its forms*
- *A network of adequately funded, readily accessible school, public, and academic libraries that support a learning society and informed community*
- *High-speed broadband access to the resources on the World Wide Web using state-of-the-art technology*
- *Community-centered library programs that encourage discussion, debate and civic engagement*
- *Libraries that value reading and create and sustain collections that encourage users to read for pleasure, information or enlightenment*
- *Library services that support businesses, other workplaces, and economic development to create an information literate and competitive workforce*
- *The opportunity to provide ideas, criticisms, compliments, suggestions on the operation and future of their libraries and volunteer for advocacy and support.*

An Agenda for our Nation's Libraries

The National Library Agenda is intended to:

- ➢ *Provide a broad framework for discussion and consensus building at the national, state and local level*

- ➢ *Articulate a clear library agenda that resonates with the public*

- ➢ *Enable us to provide a positive message for our legislative and other advocacy efforts*

- ➢ *Provide a focus for advocacy initiatives over the next several years*

The Agenda is grouped into six major theme areas:

1. Libraries Preserve the Past and Provide a Bridge to the Future

2. Libraries Build and Strengthen Communities

3. Libraries Support Lifelong Learning

4. Libraries Create Information and Technology Literate Communities

5. Libraries Encourage Economic Development

6. Libraries Support Democracy

1.   **Libraries Preserve the Past and Provide a Bridge to the Future**
Libraries preserve the nation's culture providing a link to the past and a bridge to the future. Our heritage is currently at risk, with millions of books, documents, and archival materials, lost every year through deterioration, disaster and neglect. Technology offers the promise of preserving these documents for posterity but, digital resources themselves are fragile, and millions of digital documents, images and audio and visual recordings have already been lost through inaction.

Agenda Items:
- Support conservation and digital preservation efforts
- Amend current copyright law to allow for Digital Rights Management that protects our cultural heritage
- Establish a national education program to train digital information and preservation professionals
- Provide funding for digital preservation
- Identify what needs saving
- Develop a national approach to the digitization and long term storage of journals

2.   **Libraries Build and Strengthen Communities**
Communities that invest in their libraries understand that the services, resources, technology and staff provided enrich the quality of life. School libraries play a central role in supporting the K-12 educational community with research demonstrating that children with access to school libraries achieve greater educational success. At the college and university level, libraries that are central to campus life become a hive for intellectual activity and inquiry bringing faculty and students together to explore new territory. Public libraries play an essential role in bringing disparate groups of people together where they can debate hot topics and create stronger communities that celebrate diversity.

Agenda Items:
- Provide support to ensure that libraries that are open sufficient daytime, evening and weekend hours
- Create and promote a nationwide virtual library with access 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and 365 days a year
- Secure funding to allow for widespread renovation, rebuilding and renewal of libraries across the US
- Reserve a three-digit cell number for direct access to a librarian
- Explore the idea of a nationwide information passport or universal library card

3.   **Libraries Support Lifelong Learning**
Libraries offer an opportunity for everyone in our country to succeed, regardless of income, ethnicity or language. Learning is a lifelong process that doesn't end with the conclusion of formal education. Learning takes place in many different ways – in text, by experience, listening, and viewing, through conversation, participation and dialogue. Libraries in schools, colleges and universities and in our communities offer unique opportunities for users to embark on a lifetime of learning and self discovery by using library resources, attending a library program, or seeking the assistance of a skilled information professional.

Agenda Items:
- Support library efforts to create opportunities for educational success for every child and adult in the US
- Provide a certified school librarian in every publicly funded K-12 school.
- Provide trained children's and young adult librarians in every public library
- Lead a coalition built around literacy issues
- Support after school homework help in all libraries

4. Libraries Create Information and Technology Literate Communities

Technology offers unprecedented opportunities for critical thinking, information sharing, information access and social networks. Great libraries offer opportunities for all people to use new technologies and participate in the information society. Libraries in our communities, school and universities should be a trusted destination for cutting edge technology that provides for innovation, creation and connection.

Agenda Items:
- Provide universal access to high-speed broadband for libraries
- Establish wi-fi hubs in all libraries
- Ensure that all libraries have the technology needed to support an information literate community through a technology replacement fund
- Support on going technology training for staff
- Support funding for e-government services in all libraries
- Establish libraries as emergency responders

5. Libraries Encourage Economic Development

Our information-based economy requires a highly trained and competitive workforce. Many people are unable to go back to school to obtain the skills needed to participate in a 21st century workforce relying instead on libraries to supply the resources needed to obtain new skills and work. At the same time the increase in small businesses, home-based businesses and entrepreneurship finds many who relied on workplace libraries seeking the assistance of local libraries when it comes to securing competitive intelligence, information about business start-ups, and business planning.

Agenda Items:
- Support and build a 21st century workforce by providing up-to-date resources to support small business growth and development in all libraries
- Support small business development and growth through the development of business incubators in libraries
- Participate in economic development through partnerships and joint initiatives

6. Libraries Support Democracy

Our founding fathers believed that an informed electorate was essential to a healthy democracy. If our free society is to survive, it must ensure the preservation of records and provide free and open access to this information to all. It must ensure that citizens have the skills necessary to participate in the democratic process and it must allow unfettered dialogue and guarantee freedom of expression. Communities need safe spaces for public discourse and access to the products and processes of governance.

Agenda Items:
- Create a universal access environment in all libraries – broadband and state-of-the-art technology, 21st century information literacy skills, content, transparency, inclusiveness
- Encourage libraries role to support widespread and active participation in our democracy through civic engagement and dialogue
- Expand and protect access to information by creating content and providing widespread access
- Ensure that every library has the tools it needs to protect the intellectual freedom and privacy rights of all users
- Encourage libraries to provide a diversity of perspectives and idea

Proposed Bylaws of the Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL)

Text in blue are questions and suggestions for new Bylaws wording.

Text in red is questioned phrasing/concept or recommended for removal.

Table of Contents

Article 1. Name

The name of this association is the Association for Rural & Small Libraries.

Article 2. Object

The Association is established exclusively for charitable, educational and **scientific [?]** purposes. It **will be** incorporated **under the laws of Pennsylvania** and conducted as a nonprofit corporation under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 **(or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law)** to promote librarianship, to develop and increase the usefulness of small & rural libraries, to cultivate the practice of librarianship and to foster a spirit of cooperation among members of the profession, particularly those serving rural and special populations.

Article 3. Membership

Membership in this Association will be open to any person or institution interested in librarianship and in libraries serving rural and small communities or serving special populations, corporate or other.

Dues for membership will be set by the Board of Directors and ratified by a majority vote of those members present and voting at the Association's Annual Meeting. Dues will be assessed by the Association annually for the period commencing July 1 of the year. **The dues to be paid to the Association will be as follows: (a) Individual members. $39; (b) Institutional members. $**   **[It would be best not to include dollar amount in Bylaws. Amount should be in a procedures document. Then it would not be necessary to amend the Bylaws when the amounts are needed to be changed.]**

Article 4. Meetings

The Association may hold as many meetings a year as it wishes either virtual or real time.
One of those meetings will be designated the Annual meeting at which time new members are elected to the Board of Directors.

Article 5. Officers
Section 1. The officers of the Association are the president, vice president/president-elect, immediate past president, secretary, treasurer **[secretary/treasurer]**.
[Should the Board of Directors elect officers who are persons not elected to and serving on the Board? The following implies they could. I would suggest that Directors should only elect officers from amongst themselves.]

Section 2. Terms of Office. The officers of the Association will be elected annually by ballot by the Board of Directors at the first meeting of the board following the annual meeting**[.] and will serve a term of one year, taking office at the end of said meeting. Each will serve a term of one (1) year except as otherwise provided by these Bylaws. In the event that a successor has not been duly elected or qualified at the end of the term of office specified above, the incumbent will continue to serve until duly succeeded. [This is far too mushy to be written into Bylaws.** *Roberts* **allows for incumbents to remain under these circumstances. But, written into Bylaws, it encourages groups not to make a decision to find a candidate.]**

Section 3. Duties of officers. The officers will perform those duties assigned to them by these bylaws, **[where are these in the Bylaws?]** the executive board**[,]** and the parliamentary authority of the Association.

Section 4. Removal of Officers. An officer may be removed by majority vote of the Board present and voting, for cause, the causes will be determined by Association policy, **[what cause(s)?; what policy?]** as enacted by the Board.

Article 6. Board of Directors
Section 1. Members. The Board of Directors will be composed of **[twelve members, one third of whom will be elected annually. In addition, the Director of the Center for the Study of Rural Librarianship at Clarion State University will serve as an Association Director perpetuates.] the, officers, the immediate past president and as many members at large as the membership may elect, not to exceed 25. [? Oh, I think this is far too mushy and far too many people.]**

Section 2. Terms of Office. (a) Officers. Board members who are Association officers will serve a term on the executive board corresponding to their term of office, except the president. (b) Immediate past president. The immediate past president will serve a term of two (2) years on the executive board. (c) At-Large members. At-large Board members will assume office at the close of the annual meeting immediately following their election and will serve a term of three years, **at large members [and]** may be elected to serve for up to two (2) terms. **[How many years off before they can be elected again? Of can they never be re-elected?] (d) In the event that a successor has not been elected or qualified at the end of the term of office specified above, the incumbent will continue to serve until properly succeeded. [This is really not good - suggests a mushy slide if a candidate can not be found. I would eliminate this provision.] (e) All founding Board members will have a perpetual, nonvoting, position on the Board. [Is this really a good idea? Since anyone should be "allowed" to attend any board meeting, former members could sit in if they wanted.]**

Section 3. Duties. The Board of Directors will have general supervision of the affairs of the Association between its meetings, fix the time and place of business meetings, make recommendations to the Association and perform other duties as specified by these Bylaws or the parliamentary authority. The Board will be subject to the orders of the Association and none of its acts will conflict with action taken by the Association.

Section 4. Powers. The Board of Directors will have sole power, on behalf of the Association, or any of its committees or subunits, to incur indebtedness, solicit funding, make public statements, issue public writings and establish and maintain relations with other organizations.

Section 5. Quorum and voting. A simple majority of the Board will constitute a quorum. Resolutions of the Board of Directors will be supported by the vote of at least a simple majority of its members present and voting.

Section 6. Meetings. Meetings of the Board of Directors will be called, and the time and place set, at the discretion of the president or six (6) voting members of the Board. However, there will be at least four (4) meetings of the Board of Directors called and convened between the annual meeting of the Association.

Section 7. Publication of resolutions. The text of these bylaws, and all major resolutions and policy decisions of the Association will be published on the Association web page.

Section 8. Removal of Board Member. A member may be removed by vote of the Board, for cause, the causes will be determined by Association policy, as enacted by the Board. **[what cause(s)?; what policy?]**

Article 7. Committees
There will be such committees and other organization as the Board of Directors will create or will be created by a simple majority vote of those present and voting at any meeting of the Association.

Article 8. Parliamentary Authority
Section 1. The rules contained in the Special Parliamentary Procedures for Small Boards in *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised.* (Scott Foresman, 1990) will govern the Association in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are consistent with these Bylaws and any special rules of order the Association may adopt.

Section 2. Voting. The majority of the members voting will decide general and special elections.

Section 3. Bylaw changes. The Bylaws of the Association may be changed by a majority vote of the Board present and voting and approved by a vote of the members at the Annual Meeting of the Association.

Article 9. Protection of Tax Exempt Status
Section 1. Activities Restricted. No part of the net earnings of the Association will inure to the benefit of, or be distributable to, its members, executive board members, officers or other private persons, except that the Association will be authorized and empowered to make reasonable compensation for services rendered to make payments and distributions in furtherance of the Association's educational, charitable and **scientific [? see Article 2 above]** purposes, including distributions to other such organizations under Section 501(c)(6) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law). No substantial part of the activities of the Association will be the carrying on of propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and the Association will not participate in, or intervene in, including the publishing or distribution of statements or any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office. Notwithstanding any other provision of the Association's articles of incorporation or these bylaws, the Association will not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law) or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are deductible under Section 170(c)(2) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue law).

Section 2. Dissolution. Upon any dissolution, voluntary or involuntary, revocation of its charter, insolvency or bankruptcy of the Association, the executive board will, after paying or making provisions for the payment of all of the liabilities of the Association, dispose of all of the remaining assets of the Association **by donation to the Library of Congress** for such use as the Library of Congress will at its own discursion may determine.

Date Adopted by the Board of the Association: _____

American Library Association Affiliation Guidelines

The ALA Executive board approves the following criteria and procedures for affiliation:
1. The organization should be national or international in scope;
2. The organization should be nonprofit;
3. The organization should have interests consistent with those of ALA;
4. The organization can affiliate only at one level, either with the Association or with a subdivision of the Association;
5. It has a sufficiently large membership (usually 100) and has been in existence for a sufficient time (usually 4 years) to give the promise of worthwhile activity and continued support;
6. The organization's constitution and bylaws do not conflict with ALA's;
7. The organization does not discriminate in its membership on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, age, physical handicaps or national origin.

Concerning procedures, it is recommended that:
1. Applications for affiliation should be supported by:

   a. A statement including the year of founding; the total number of members; a list of journals and other publications, if any; or other evidence of interest in libraries and librarianship or information science.

   b. A brief history of the organization, including its aims.

   c. A copy of its current constitution and bylaws.

   d. The names and addresses of current officers.

   e. A statement of ways in which the applicant visualizes cooperation with ALA.

   f. A statement that the organization does not discriminate in its membership on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, age, physical handicaps or national origin.

2. The ALA Constitution and Bylaws Committee will examine the applicant's constitution and bylaws to see that no conflict exists between the ALA constitution and bylaws and the applicant's.

3. The Executive Director will evaluate the other documents mentioned above in point 1 to make a preliminary determination concerning the applicant's meeting ALA criteria and will so report to the Executive Board.

4. The Executive Board will act on the Executive Director's report and forward recommended application to the Council for its action.

ALA Affiliate dues are $110.00 per year. Dues are payable upon acceptance by ALA of your Affiliate application as discussed above. Your Affiliate anniversary will be one year from the month you begin paying dues and your status will automatically renew upon payment of dues in subsequent years.

You may end your Affiliates status by formal notice to ALA's Executive Director or by non-payment of dues. ALA reserves the right to withdraw your Affiliate status for reasons as described in the ALA Constitution and Bylaws for any member. Affiliate dues are currently tied to the dues level for 'Other Non-Profit Organizations' and may be changed upon a vote of the membership.