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Oregon Libraries: Ideas as Work

Oregon is an inspiration. Whether you come to it, or are born to it, you become entranced by our state's beauty, the opportunity she affords, and the independent spirit of her citizens.

—TOM MCCALL, Governor of Oregon from 1967 to 1975

Oregon is known for its natural beauty, its friendly people and their innovative ideas. The New York Times frequently writes about the state's music, art and food scene, especially Oregon's Pinots and Portland's food carts. Oregon State University recently patented a strain of dulce seaweed that tastes like bacon (Oregon State University, 2015). Nike shoes and Intel computer processors are known worldwide. There was even a Keep Portland Weird festival in Paris, France in 2012 (Moroz, 2012). State policy concepts such as Governor Oswald West's plan in 1913 to designate the entire Oregon Coast as public property are concepts which Oregonians are thankful for today (Blakely, 2013).

The uniqueness of these wonderful ideas naturally leads to wondering about the conditions that made them possible. One of my favorite examples from Oregon history regards the Civilian Public Service Camp near Waldport on the Oregon Coast that housed conscientious objectors during World War II. Many were writers and artists, so they organized art classes and theater productions to pass the time. Some of their writings and paintings have been saved in the Special Collections of the Watzek Library at Lewis & Clark College (<http://digitalcollections.lclark.edu/exhibits/show/civilian-public-service-collec/archival-collections>). After the war many camp occupants went to San Francisco and started the counter-culture movement; they were the original beatniks (Kirkland, 2005). Oregon Poet Laureate William Stafford spent time in Civilian Public Service camps as well, but in Arkansas and California (Poetry Foundation, 2015).

Another example of Oregon innovation began when radio engineers Howard Vollum and Jack Murdock returned from World War II. Together they started Tektronix, an electronics company that produced the world's finest oscilloscopes, critical for technological developments in telecommunications, computers, semiconductors, medicine, aviation and space exploration. To encourage experimentation and product invention, Tektronix allowed every employee access to spare parts. Many Tektronix employees started their own companies, which led to a technology cluster in Oregon called the Silicon Forest. In addition to treating women as equals in this egalitarian company, Vollum and Murdock created a new management style based on trust, creativity and hard work which inspired their employees to invent products that would change the world (OPB, 2010). These values are similar to those espoused in the Code of Ethics of the American Library Association (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/proethics/codeofethics/codeethics>).

Can Oregon libraries create conditions that would similarly empower their employees to develop new ideas to serve their patrons? What kind of ideas will Oregonians have as a result of visiting their local libraries? These are questions that will continue to be answered by librarians long after this issue is published.

This issue of the OLAQ is intended to be a summer potluck, except instead of food, librarians have brought their latest ideas to share with colleagues around our beautiful state. Many of these ideas were born in response to challenges these libraries face, challenges that may be similar to issues that your library is working to resolve. The following five articles candidly describe the authors' experiences implementing their ideas, including practicalities and pitfalls they faced. These stories may help oth-



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ers save time, money and effort while providing inspiration from their successes. Molly Gunderson and Turner Masland describe an electronic document delivery service they developed for Portland State University to reduce the time and effort expended to fulfill article requests from students and faculty. Kelly Peterson-Fairchild and Aja Bettencourt-McCarthy discuss their use of a general education review at Oregon Tech as an opportunity to advocate for, and implement more Information Literacy instruction throughout the curriculum. Lydia Harlan and Miriam Rigby detail the complex process of the University of Oregon Libraries' response to student interest in the development of a comprehensive Popular Reading Collection. Stephanie Chase, Karen Muller and Erin Sharwell report on exciting and innovative new developments at the Hillsboro Public Library, including reorganizing children's books by subject matter for easier access, creating new ways of getting books to the public via book vending machines and mobile collections, and expanding their "library of things" collection to include kitchen gadgets, programmable robots, and outdoor recreation equipment. Heather McNeil rounds out the issue with wonderful news regarding the creation of early learning spaces in Deschutes County Public Libraries, where the community has come together to support children's early learning through creative play, discovery and exploration.

We hope you find the Summer 2015 issue of the OLAQ useful and interesting. Please enjoy the rest of your summer!



—CHARLES WOOD
OLAQ Guest Editor
 Volunteer Librarian
 Aloha Community Library
 Drexel University, MSLIS 2010

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Document Delivery by the Seat of Your Pants

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TURNER MASLAND

Introduction

Portland State University (PSU) is the largest university in Oregon with a population of almost 30,000 students. Located in the heart of downtown Portland our campus is woven directly into the fabric of the city. There are many benefits to urban campuses, but one constant challenge is lack of space. As one of the few locations with dedicated study space and collaborative learning, the PSU library is a popular location for students to gather and spend time on campus. Our gate count numbers increase every year and students heavily use our course reserve textbooks, computer labs, laptop checkouts, and practice presentation rooms. However, like many libraries, we found our print circulation numbers going down. At the same time, we were looking for ways to improve services to our patrons. We thought about how we could utilize our large print collection to make it more accessible. In order to maximize space in our main library, many of our journals and books are located in an offsite storage (the Annex) located four miles from the library. The Annex holds about one third of our collection. If patrons needed a journal article, the wait could be anywhere from 13 days. There was a great deal of schlepping back and forth between the Annex and the PSU Library. First, patrons would request the journal article, then the library staff would retrieve the entire journal from the Annex and bring it back. The patron would have to come to the library to scan or photocopy the article. Finally, when the patron was done the staff person would take the journal back to the Annex.

We wanted to eliminate the number of steps involved and get the article into the hands of the patron within 24 hours. We worked with our Library Technologies team to purchase and install a Scannex scanner out in the storage facility. Because we call the storage facil-



ity “The Annex” we jokingly referred to it as “The Scannex in the Annex.” With the new scanner, we could scan the journal article and email it to the patron right away. The whole process took about 15 minutes, greatly reducing the turnaround time. Developing a document delivery service allowed us to provide excellent customer service while we continue to transition lesser user collection materials to offsite storage.

Our goal in writing this article is to share how we developed this service. We talk about the implementation of the service: from choosing software platforms and scanning hardware to deciding on document delivery policies and marketing strategies. We then will share some usage statistics and provide insights into who the users of this service are and how they are using it. We will also provide some testimonials from faculty who are using the service. With our conclusion we will share how we have benefited from this service and include our suggestions for other libraries who are considering implementing a similar service.

Implementation

Implementing a document delivery service was comprised of the following steps: designing workflows for our staff, shaping policies to guide the service, deciding on the best scanning hardware to meet our needs and marketing the service. We wanted a service that would be relatively easy to roll out without having to learn new systems. At the time of development we knew that we would soon be migrating to the Orbis Cascade shared integrated library system. Knowing how much work that would involve, we needed a simple solution for this new service. The following section will describe our decision making during the implementation process.

In designing our workflow, we started determining what platform would be best for supporting our document delivery service. We were already using ILLiad for our interlibrary loan services, making the platform a natural fit for document delivery. Essentially, document delivery would be an extension of the work we were already doing. Previous to rolling out document delivery, the Interlibrary Loan Office would receive many requests for articles found in journals we owned physically. Previously, we would cancel these requests with instructions on how to find the articles in our collection. The intention was to encourage patrons to access these materials on their own. With the advent of document delivery, and the emphasis we were placing on customer service, we would simply process the request: scanning and delivering the article. Because we were already using ILLiad, it would be easy to adopt interlibrary loan workflows for our document delivery service. For example, we would print pull slips for both document delivery and interlibrary loan congruently, and these slips could be given to staff either in our main library or to be brought out to the Annex. This was a similar process that was already in effect for interlibrary loan. The major difference would be the scanning of material at the Annex, saving our storage staff time and energy of transporting material between locations. The additional benefit of ILLiad was the automation of patron notifications, which were built in to the workflow of processing requests. It would not require any extra work to inform our patrons on the status of their requests. And these requests could be managed in their interlibrary loan accounts, allowing for a central location for patrons to view all of their current library requests. Given all of these factors: use of ILLiad by the Interlibrary Loan Office; automation of workflows, delivery and notification; and centralization of patron library requests: ILLiad was our document delivery platform of choice.

The next step towards implementing a document delivery service was shaping our policy. There were some important questions we needed to answer. What would we scan? Who would be eligible for this service? How long should our patrons expect to wait? In



terms of what we would deliver, we started only with journal articles, to determine work load and decide later if we would include other material (such as book chapters or microform). We limited each request to one article per journal. If patrons needed more than one article, or if the article was longer than fifty pages, we would pull the journal and place it on the hold shelf for the patron. Our service would be open to all currently enrolled students and all faculty and staff. Due to our large patron base, we are not able to open the service up to community users and alumni. However, we are certainly willing to pull physical material from the Annex for our community users and alumni. We advertise our turnaround time as being 24–72 hours. Realistically, we are able to process document delivery requests within 24 hours, if not the same day we receive the request. But advertising a 23 day turnaround time accounts for instances when we might be short staffed, or our systems being down, or for another unpredictable barrier of service that might (and probably will) occur.

As mentioned in the introduction, a major motivating factor for providing a document delivery was an attempt to make materials stored in the Annex more accessible for our patrons. This factor played a huge role in designing our workflow, specifically in regards to what scanning hardware we wanted in the Annex. At the time of implementing this service: the Public Access Services department was managing two different scanners: BScan for interlibrary loan services and Scannex for public use. The BScan has many benefits: it is hardware that has been developed and marketed for interlibrary loan services. However, it takes a lot of training to learn how to use properly. As we mentioned earlier, we needed a fast and simple roll out. Scannex scanners are incredibly user friendly, and the accompanying platform allowed us to easily integrate the scanner into our ILLiad workflows. Much like ILLiad being our logical choice for a document delivery platform, Scannex scanners were a logical choice for our storage facilities scanning hardware.

The final step in our implementation process was deciding on how we were going to market the document delivery service as we rolled it out. At first, we didn't market it at all. We simply began to process all interlibrary loan requests for articles found in journals we owned as document delivery requests. This was a change to our previous policy of simply canceling requests. This allowed for beta testing, making sure all of our systems were working as expected. From there we marketed first to campus faculty members, who were very pleased with the service. This new system was communicated through our liaison librarians, who already had working relationships with teaching and research faculty. From there, we marketed document delivery through traditional means: setting up a page on the library's website, announcing it through social media, and continuing to work with liaison and reference librarians to promote the services.

Use Statistics

The following section will highlight document delivery use statistics in an attempt to provide insight in how our patrons are using our services and who our users are. We will provide insight into how these statistics were collected and provide insights into what we feel these numbers tell us. It's important to note that this is a casual assessment and we are providing anecdotal evidence. In our conclusion we will talk about a need for a more in-depth and scientific assessment of this service.

We would like to start by providing how we obtained these statistics. We used ILLiad's Custom Request Search function to gather these numbers. Our search criteria was limited to Transaction Status (Request Finished), Process Type (Document Delivery), Request Type



(Article) and Creation Date (between July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014 or July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015). We used creation date as our criteria for the time frame because we wanted to capture when the patron was interacting with the service, rather than when the staff were processing the service (which would have been Transaction Date). We limited the Request Type because purchase requests that are submitted through ILLiad import as Loans, and we wanted to be sure we were only capturing material we were providing our patrons digitally. And we only wanted to look at the Transaction Status because we wanted to look at material we successfully provided our patrons.

Table 1: Total Requests

2013-2014	2014-2015
Total Requests: 1884	Total Requests: 1049
Total Number of Patrons: 827	Total Number of Patrons: 487

The first set of numbers we looked at were the total number of document delivery requests that were successfully completed and the total number of patrons. As you can see in Table 1, about there was a drop of about 44 percent of total requests placed and a drop of about 41 percent total number of patrons using the service in 2014–2015 versus 2013–2014. The biggest change in the library’s operation that could have affected this major drop was a migration from WorldCat Local as our primary discovery layer to Ex Libris’ Primo discovery layer. We feel there are two possible reasons this migration caused this drop in numbers.

The first possible explanation is that our patrons were better able to find what they were looking for with the Primo discovery layer. Primo allows our users to conduct a much more granulated, article level search with relevant hits appearing higher in their patron’s search results. Portland State University has also been making a concerted effort to provide item level holdings of our serials, both physical and electronic, which provides our users with a more accurate picture of what is owned locally. These factors could mean that users are better able to find locally held material, especially of electronic material, and thus they do not need to use the document delivery service. When they are not able to access their desired articles, those requests are processed through interlibrary loan.

The second possible explanation for this drop is that users found Primo to be a barrier of service and thus simply placed fewer requests. Anecdotal evidence to support this claim starts with the fact that many of our power researchers (including faculty and graduate students) were really frustrated with the switch from WorldCat Local to Primo and might have sought out other sources for their research needs. Additionally, the Public Access Services department saw our Summit consortial borrowing numbers dropped by roughly 33 percent and our interlibrary loan numbers dropped by roughly 40 percent. We know that the Summit system had a login process that was not user friendly. Before all Orbis Cascade Alliance Libraries migrated to the Ex Libris system, library patrons had to log into multiple systems (first Ex Libris’ system and then OCLC’s system) to successfully request Summit material. These multiple authentications were frustrating at worst, irritating at best. Interlibrary loan numbers might have dropped because the total number of bibliographic records in Primo is much smaller compared to the number of records found in WorldCat.



Perhaps if our users were experiencing barriers of service for Summit and interlibrary loan, it's certainly logical to believe that they experience barriers of service for placing document delivery requests as well.

Again, understanding the real reason why these numbers dropped would take a more in-depth examination of our user's information searching behavior. While we only have a cursory understanding of why these numbers dropped, we do know that they definitely decreased.

Table 2: Physical Location of Requested Articles

2013-2014	2014-2015
Main Library: 968	Main Library: 724
The Annex: 325	The Annex: 297
Other: 591	Other: 23

Since a major motivating factor for implementing a document delivery service was to better connect our patron with the collection that is housed in the Annex, our second set of numbers looks at where the requested material lives within our collection. As mentioned in the previous section, we saw a drop in usage of the services between the two years it has been operating. What is interesting here is the fact that requested material from the main library dropped roughly 25 percent whereas requested material that lives in the Annex dropped only about 10 percent. We feel that this shows the use of the service to request articles from our offsite facility remained relatively stable compared to the use of the system as a whole.

The other important note is that the "Other" category dropped significantly. These requests did not have any location information, which is provided by the staff or student workers who were processing the requests. The sharp decrease in number indicates that staff are much more effective in processing these requests.

The third set of numbers we looked at provided insight into who were using this service. Not surprisingly, it was our graduate students, followed by our faculty. These two groups are conducting a significant percentage of research activity on campus. As we continue to provide this service we hope to see more distance users take advantage of document delivery, as it is an efficient way to connect these users with our library materials. (See Table 3 next page.)

Finally, we looked at the top ten departments represented by our users. Our top users have consistently been associated with the sciences and social sciences. This makes sense, as these disciplines traditionally use timely articles as their primary research material, due to an articles ability to represent current scholarly communication, whereas the arts and humanities are using primary sources as common materials in their research. (See Table 4 next page.)

We look forward to collecting additional use statistics as we continue to provide these services. We hope to further understand how our patrons interact with this service so we can strive to best meet their needs.



Table 3: Use by Patron Status

2013-2014	2014-2015
Emeritus: 11	Emeritus: 0
Faculty: 391	Faculty: 233
Faculty Distance: 8	Faculty Distance: 7
Faculty Visiting: 2	Faculty Visiting: 0
Grad: 926	Grad: 217
Grad Distance: 97	Grad Distance: 24
High school: 0	High school: 1
Honors: 7	Honors: 23
Staff: 36	Staff: 36
Staff Distance: 1	Staff Distance: 1
Undergrad: 360	Undergrad: 121
Undergrad Distance: 14	Undergrad Distance: 4

Table 4: Top Ten Departments

2013-2014	2014-2015
Biology: 146 requests	Engineering: 151 requests
Social Work: 139 requests	Biology: 98 requests
Psychology: 138 requests	English: 86 requests
Chemistry: 125 requests	Chemistry: 85 requests
Engineering: 119 requests	Physics: 61 requests
Graduate School of Education: 96 requests	Social Work: 55 requests
Environmental Science: 83 requests	Education: 47 requests
Urban Studies & Planning: 81 requests	Psychology: 40 requests
Architecture: 79 requests	Environmental Science: 36 requests
English: 66 requests	Urban Studies & Planning: 35 requests



Faculty Delivery Testimonials

In September of 2014, at the Northwest Interlibrary Loan conference we presented how we implemented our document delivery service. Included in that presentation were testimonials we gathered from PSU faculty, illuminating their experiences with this service. We feel these testimonials are worth including here, to provide a wider lense than just the numbers provide:

“I greatly appreciate the delivery service. I have developed some physical disability issues that have made it difficult for me to get to the library. I am grateful for the service! Keep up the good work!”

“This is so great! It would also be terrific to have some kind of pickup at departments.


Thank you so much for doing this and for all your help!”

“Love it! This saves so much time and makes me feel as if my work is valued and supported.”

Conclusion

While it is apparent that our use numbers have fluctuated, our faculty testimonials have given us confidence that document delivery has been a welcome addition to the PSU library’s service toolbox. Document delivery allows library staff to quickly provide electronic copies of articles and book chapters to our patrons, saving them time. By installing the scanner in the Annex, the number of materials that need to be physically transported between locations has decreased dramatically, saving the time and energy of our staff members.

If you are considering implementing a similar service, our biggest recommendation is to make sure that you have an appropriate level of staff who will be able to handle the scanning that will be involved. Here at PSU we had to increase our student worker hours by about 20 hours a week to process these requests. Also, you want to be sure that you find the right platform and hardware to best meet your needs. At PSU, ILLiad made the most sense as our platform, as it was one we were already utilizing for our interlibrary loan services. We found the Scannex scanners to be the most user friendly in our Annex, but there are certainly other options available that might best meet your library’s unique needs. An additional consideration is how you will present this service both on your website and within your online catalog/discovery layer. If the patrons are unable to find the service, then they are not going to be able to use it. We have included a link to both interlibrary loan and document delivery on every item record that is not available online in full text. Along these same lines, we want to encourage libraries to have an aggressive marketing campaign, to let users know about your document delivery service.

Rolling out this service took a considerable amount of work, from planning and troubleshooting the service to raising awareness about its usefulness, but we feel that the time and energy it took to implement it was well worth it. If you think that this is a service that you would like to provide your patrons, we highly encourage you to move forward with it and we will be more than happy to further share our experience getting it off the ground. 



Building Bridges: Integrating the Library into General Education Reform

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Abstract

General education has been a source of controversy within and outside the academy for several decades. In recent years, a number of Oregon universities, including Oregon Tech, have undergone or are undertaking general education review. This paper explores the role of the library in general education review. At Oregon Tech, librarians have been included in the general education review process and have leveraged this position to advocate for information literacy education on campus. In addition to sharing the successes and challenges faced by Oregon Tech librarians, this article investigates some of the opportunities that a general education review process provides for incorporating information literacy across disciplines through formal integration into the university curriculum.

Background

In order to demonstrate their relevance on campus, academic libraries must work closely to align library services with institutional and faculty goals (Pritchard, 1996; Chiste, Glover, & Westwood, 2000). Information literacy is integral to both the academic library mission and the university charge to educate lifelong learners. While traditional one-shot instruction sessions continue to dominate information literacy instruction at institutions around the country (Artman, Fiscaro-Palowski, & Monge, 2010; Mery, Newby, & Peng, 2012) and in the Pacific Northwest (Phelps, Senior, & Diller, 2011), both library and instructional faculty are beginning to see the limitations of this model and are seeking ways to



integrate information literacy more broadly. Jacobs and Jacobs, reflecting on their experience, state that they “have come to understand that if we are indeed committed to teaching IL skills to students, IL needs to be fully integrated into a course” (2009, p. 74). While some libraries (Hall, 2012; Holderied, 2013) have found success incorporating information literacy into existing first year experience programs, Oregon Tech does not currently have such a program that can be easily expanded to include information literacy instruction. Instead, librarians must work with all departments on campus to encourage information literacy. The push for general education review at Oregon Tech presented a unique opportunity to better integrate information literacy campus-wide.

General education has been a source of controversy within and outside the academy for several decades (Fuess & Mitchell, 2011). In recent years, several Oregon universities (White, 1994; Weikel, 1999), including Oregon Tech, have undergone or are undertaking general education review processes. In April of 2013, Oregon Tech’s Provost appointed a task force charged with reviewing and reevaluating Oregon Tech’s overall general education requirements. The university’s Essential Student Learning Outcomes (ESLOs) were revised as part of this process.

Oregon Tech’s Essential Learning Outcomes (ESLOs)

Oregon Tech’s ESLOs reflect expectations of the knowledge, skills, and abilities that students will acquire during their time at Oregon Tech. They are the basis for the General Education requirements that lay the foundation upon which the major curricula build. By engaging in these ESLOs, Oregon Tech graduates will develop the habits of mind and behaviors of professionals and lifelong learners. After a year-long process, Oregon Tech adopted the following ESLOs.

Oregon Tech students will:

- Communicate effectively orally and in writing;
- engage in a process of inquiry and analysis;
- make and defend reasonable ethical judgments;
- collaborate effectively in teams or groups;
- demonstrate quantitative literacy; and
- explore diverse perspectives.

(Oregon Tech, 2015)

Oregon Tech’s ESLOs were adopted with minimal input from librarians who felt that the expectations of information literacy in the institutional ESLO’s were low. The librarians worried that, as written, the ESLOs failed to address the breadth and depth necessary for students to become critical users and creators of information. The critical thinking and information literacy components, which were included as essential learning outcomes from the American Association of Colleges and Universities (2011) LEAP campaign, were not adopted at Oregon Tech. The rationale behind this decision was that the number of ESLOs was becoming unwieldy and should be limited to something more manageable. Instead, the decision was made to include critical thinking and information literacy skills in Oregon Tech’s Communication and Inquiry and Analysis ESLOs.

To advocate for information literacy, librarians drew upon longstanding relationships with key instructional faculty. This effort resulted in librarians being included in two subcommittees where much of the work to define general education outcomes is happen-



ing. Serving on these sub-committees has allowed for more direct librarian involvement in Oregon Tech's General Education review. The AACU LEAP Value Rubrics are being heavily consulted in the subcommittees and the librarians are actively advocating for integrating information literacy and critical thinking content into the existing ESLO categories.

Communication

Artman et al. (2010) argue that writing instructors have begun to recognize the importance of information literacy and the ability to thoughtfully incorporate research into writing assignments. This is certainly the case at Oregon Tech where the majority of information literacy instruction has historically been integrated into freshman and sophomore level writing courses. A report, prepared by the Executive Committee of the Assessment Commission at Oregon Tech in 2011, tasked writing and library faculty to collaborate on improving support and documentation in student writing. Librarians took up this charge and have been providing information literacy instruction in writing classes since. While there has been a history of successful collaborations between Communication and Library faculty, information literacy instruction has been incorporated into the writing curriculum piecemeal at the discretion of individual faculty.

As the Communication subcommittee explored options for restructuring general education writing requirements, information literacy was repeatedly recognized as an important component in the success in these courses. The subcommittee's final recommendations focused on better integration between writing courses and discipline course content, at both the intermediate and capstone levels, to motivate students to select meaningful topics and conduct relevant research as a part of the writing process. The focus on the research proposed by the subcommittee creates a renewed need for research assistance and a natural access point for integrating information literacy instruction in the curriculum.

Inquiry and Analysis

Initially the Inquiry and Analysis subcommittee adopted a narrow interpretation of inquiry and analysis focused primarily on the scientific method. Over the course of several meetings, significant progress has been made in educating faculty about the importance of research skills and the subcommittee is now open to having a stronger information literacy presence in the general education curriculum. An internal report written by the Inquiry & Analysis ESLO subcommittee during the Spring of 2015 demonstrated increased recognition that more work needs to be done in the area of information literacy. One of the sub-committee's goals for next year is to reflect further on research and information literacy requirements. In addition, the sub-committee plans to more fully explore the possibilities of an inquiry seminar and stated "this course could support research and information literacy skills that remain somewhat 'homeless.'" A library of assignments is another recommendation that was presented to the sub-committee and that will be considered next Fall. Initiatives like these present an opportunity to introduce the new ACRL framework and to give faculty sample research assignments. Librarians have pushed for assignments and courses that build information literacy skills for many years but have lacked the mechanism to make them a reality.

Oregon Tech's Curriculum Planning Commission recently approved a three credit, junior-level library and information science class (LIS 305). This will be the first time that the library is responsible for a regularly offered, credit bearing course. LIS 305 was specifically mentioned in the Inquiry & Analysis ESLO subcommittee Spring 2015 report as




having substantial inquiry and analysis components. On a campus which has been slow to integrate information literacy into the curriculum this is a tremendous improvement and one which we hope will help make information literacy and critical thinking more of an institutional priority.

Discussion

Oregon Tech's general education subcommittees will continue to meet regularly over the next two years. During that time, librarians will continue to advocate for information literacy on the Communication and Inquiry and Analysis subcommittees with particular attention paid to finding ways to integrate ACRL's Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education (2015) into the campus conversation.

Serving on Oregon Tech's general education subcommittees has provided librarians an opportunity to advocate for information literacy on campus. Perhaps equally important, however, have been the conversations with faculty about research processes and methods that occurred throughout the general education review process. Teaching is still the central focus for Oregon Tech faculty but there is a growing push to create a role for applied research. Librarians can help advance knowledge creation on campus by including research design and methods in instruction. That librarian expertise in this area is being recognized by instruction faculty further strengthens the library's role on campus.

Conclusions

General education review offers librarians a unique opportunity to have a voice and build relationships on campus. If librarians are not immediately invited into the review process, capitalizing on existing relationships with instructional faculty may open doors and provide access. While assisting with general education review can be time consuming and frustrating, at times, the chance to integrate information literacy systematically within the curriculum and the opportunity to educate a range of faculty, assessment coordinators, and administrators about the importance of information literacy to lifelong learning make the effort worthwhile. 

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What's Old Is New Again: The Popular Reading Collection at University of Oregon Libraries

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University students, staff, and faculty read for fun and want their campus library to support this pursuit. We have the direct requests and circulation statistics to prove it. University of Oregon students expressed interest in the development of a Popular Reading Collection (PRC) at UO Libraries during a regular meeting of the Dean's Student Advisory Group in February 2011. Former Dean Deborah Carver brought the idea to Collection Managers, our collection development team, who subsequently undertook an investigation of how we might pursue and support this request. Now, more than four years later, we have a lively re-designed space and have honed our methods of building and circulating the collection. Our circulation stats show that our academic community is indeed using the PRC and is checking out more material as we revise the program. With this success, it's time to reflect on our implementation of the PRC and what we've learned.

Supportive Research, Community and Strategic Alignment

The concept of a PRC was not a new or original idea. Browsing Rooms were once common in academic libraries, but over the decades, students were increasingly directed to the public library for any non-academic interest. Julie Elliott writes, "Part of what may have led to the decline in students' extracurricular reading is an attitude of elitism and even hints of censorship in the name of selection on the part of the librarians recommending the books," (2007, p. 35). Yet, the (re)implementation of a PRC is a newer, revitalized idea based on recent



studies. Pleasure reading benefits the student in a number of ways, from nurturing creativity (Kelley & Kneipp, 2009), to enhancing empathy (Djikic, Oatley, Zoeterman, & Peterson, 2009; Kidd & Castano, 2013). J.D. Gallik found that “a significant connection was found between achievement and the time these college students spent reading for pleasure ...” (1999, p. 480).

Furthermore, UO Libraries’ branch locations had already embraced a variety of popular materials for recreation and research. Beyond the more standard music and film collections, in 2007, Singer Science Librarian Annie Zeidman-Karpinski spearheaded a video game collection at UO’s Allan Price Science Commons & Research Library for recreational and curricular use, complete with collection development policy. And more recently, Yen Tran, Outreach & Student Engagement Librarian at the Global Scholars Hall Library Commons, has cultivated a collection that includes foreign language popular magazines and other light reading aimed at students studying the world’s languages and cultures. Popular reading is once again finding a place in the academic library, but we had to determine whether it was the right fit for the UO Libraries’ main branch, the Knight Library.

With student endorsement, clear precedent on campus, and research supporting a new PRC, we studied how it aligned with the library’s strategic initiatives. As the initial 2011 request came through the Dean’s Student Advisory Group, there was positive alignment with the initiative “Improve the User Experience” (UO Libraries Strategic Directions, 2012). The character of the collection was also planned to harmonize with the initiative to advance diversity through the purposeful selection of items featuring characters who are people of color, have disabilities, are LGBTQ, and are from other diverse backgrounds, including international locations and viewpoints. Likewise, items would be selected to represent diverse authors. With the conceptualization of the collection in support of these initiatives, we turned to space. Spurred by the concept that this is not just a collection of books, but an experience designed to create a culture of reading at the University of Oregon, fresh carpeting and painting were prioritized for the South Reading Room of the Knight Library where the PRC is housed. Tens of thousands of dollars would be invested in soft seating and specialized, distinctive shelving. This vision meshed well with the UO Libraries’ Space Planning Team’s goal “to create a more welcoming, comfortable and effective environment for library users and staff.”

Implementation of the First Iteration

Our plan for the collection was approved and ready for implementation. In late 2011 the first iteration of our PRC began, led by collection managers Cara List and Miriam Rigby, with a few additional team members from relevant library departments. After investigating various methods for providing popular reading material, including e-books, lending pre-loaded e-reader devices, and print book options, the library signed an agreement with McNaughton Library Subscription Services to lease print adult and young-adult fiction, for an annual fee. In addition to determining that we wanted to focus on physical books, the major features that attracted us to McNaughton’s service included that the books arrived



shelf-ready, their selection tool was relatively easy to use and provided useful information about the content and age level of the books, and they provided monthly lists of soon-to-be-published titles to aid in the selection of items. A further perk was that in leasing books, we did not have to worry about if a particular title perfectly fit our collection development goals as we could easily rid ourselves of it if there were no interest in it. In the beginning it was exciting and easy to select materials, but as time went on, challenges arose.

First, we had a hard time keeping track of the pricing structure. The leasing program allowed for points to be applied to titles, so some titles were one point and some were two, and we found it difficult to discern which were which. After a couple of months in the program we discovered there was an additional fee attached to each title ordered, for cataloging and processing. It's not clear where the breakdown in communication occurred, but the consequence was indeed clear. Our funding was structured for one annual payment, not an annual payment plus variable additional monthly costs, so this led to confusion, crisis management, and ultimately, occasional invoices for twenty-five cents.

Another challenge became visible when circulation statistics came in. We saw that items from certain series were checked out frequently, and because they were popular, we wanted to collect the complete series. However, because the leasing program focuses on very recent titles, older titles in a series were often unavailable. We investigated purchasing the older series titles separately, but decided against having a mix of leased and purchased items in the same collection because it would have added an overwhelming level of complexity to what was supposed to be a relatively small, easy, fun collection.

Lastly, we under-anticipated the amount of time it would take to deselect materials. With multiple people contributing to the selection process, there was no one clear person in charge of deselection. With so much time and energy spent getting books onto our shelves, we also did not have much time to spare to go through the full process of weeding out items, deaccessioning them, and sending them back to the warehouse. Further, due to our slow start in selecting titles and related issues with adding titles, we never managed to hit our full title capacity for our plan, so we were hesitant to have bare shelves. Nonetheless, it was clear that some titles were not circulating at all, so it was necessary to implement a weeding process.

After investing three years into this program, and sending back hundreds of books that had never circulated, it became clear that though interest in popular reading was still strong, something needed to change. A quick calculation proved that it would have been cheaper if we had simply purchased the titles we wanted at the inception of the program. This revelation came during a time of multiple large changes in the library, as one of the core collaborators on the project, Cara List, took a new opportunity with Northwestern University, and the UO Libraries was preparing for an integrated library system (ILS) migration. Rather than abandon the program altogether, the leadership was changed to facilitate a new methodology. Miriam Rigby contacted Lydia Harlan, the primary contact for the acquisitions department processes for the PRC, as she had expressed interest in finding a way to make the program better suited to our needs. Acquisitions was already facilitating the McNaughton leasing program, so we decided to do what acquisitions does best: buy books.



Developing the Process

The McNaughton books would be returned, and the timing was auspicious. It was April of 2014 and we were migrating to a new ILS. We realized that if we didn't act immediately the McNaughton bibliographic data might be forever trapped in the oubliette of a system we didn't fully understand or know how to get data from. The new purchasing plan would go into effect in fiscal year 2014–2015 (FY14), and it takes time to order, receive, and process materials. Fearful that six months of empty shelves would be the death of the PRC, we needed a transition plan. During the cross-over period of 2014 approximately 900 popular fiction books were drawn from the general Knight Library collection and relocated to the PRC shelves promptly after the McNaughton leased materials were removed. Staff selected these books by hand, walking the stacks using a barcode wand to create a list of fiction titles with good-looking covers that would look enticing on our PRC shelves. This list was then passed along to Access Services, who batch-switched the locations, and had students pull the books and add small “Popular Reading” stickers above their call numbers so they could be shelved correctly without taking hard-to-reverse measures.

During the downtime when our ILS wasn't available due to migration, we took the time to design the next implementation of the PRC. The leased materials had come in library binding, and we decided that our homegrown collection would be made up of recently published paperbacks. They are less expensive per book, thus we could grow the collection faster and be less concerned about shrinkage leaving bare shelves. The slight publishing delay for paperbacks is more than made up for by these benefits.

One exception to the paperback guideline is graphic novels, as these are often not offered in paperback. Serendipitously, at the same time we were transitioning to this new iteration, we learned that UO would be offering a program in Comics and Cartoon Studies. Retired paperbacks will likely be recycled, however Collection Managers agreed our graphic novels could transfer to the general collection once their circulation within the PRC declined, so it would be worthwhile to invest in hardback editions. It should be noted that UO's John E. Jaqua Law Library has a similar, separately-managed Popular Reading Collection which they launched following the initial success of our PRC. Like us, they decided to purchase rather than go with a leasing program, however, unlike us, hardback was their preferred format.

Switching to a direct-purchase and in-house processing model produced the need for a number of new processes to serve and maintain this collection. We would need a tool for selection and a method for placing order requests with our Acquisitions unit. At first we considered Goodreads, but found it lacked reliable paperback publication dates, and instead, created Amazon Wish Lists. In addition to the notable retailer's obvious suitability for popular book searching, the lists can be sent to our Acquisitions unit to be placed as an official order. At this point the person ordering could choose to order through Amazon for maximum efficiency, but the recent volume of our orders has been so large that placing these orders on the website through the department procurement card (a.k.a. Visa credit card) would add unwanted complexity. Not having an annual prepayment to a leasing company affords us flexibility in adapting to budgetary ebbs and flows, so this may be



a feature we would employ in the future. Our first round of orders was sent through the Pacific Northwest’s favorite book seller, Powell’s Books, in an effort to keep the business local. Recently, Acquisitions has been sending more business to Midwest Library Service for ease of billing.

Assessment

While we awaited our first wave of purchases we conducted an assessment that produced several interesting findings. A third of the temporary collection had a very low PRC to Knight (general collection) circulation ratio. That is to say the number of checkouts of a particular title in the general collection far exceeded the number of checkouts of that same title while it was temporarily relocated to the PRC. Many of these titles did not circulate in the PRC at all during the period of 5/2014 to 5/2015.

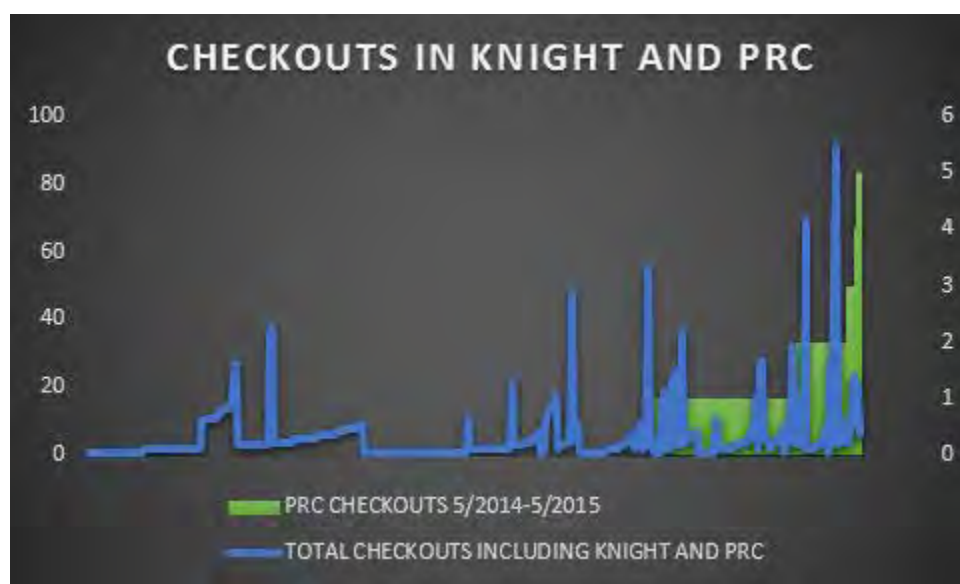


Figure 1: Total checkouts in Knight (general collection) and PRC vs. PRC alone. (Left axis “0–100” corresponds with blue Total Checkouts, Right axis “0–6” corresponds with green PRC Checkouts)

Generally, the older the title was the less it circulated in the PRC. The chart below shows the checkouts according to the year they were added to the collection, or more accurately, the year the bibliographic record was created in our ILS. Publication years were not available in our data set and we assume, based on historical practices, that the publication years would be the same or similar to the dates of addition to the collection.



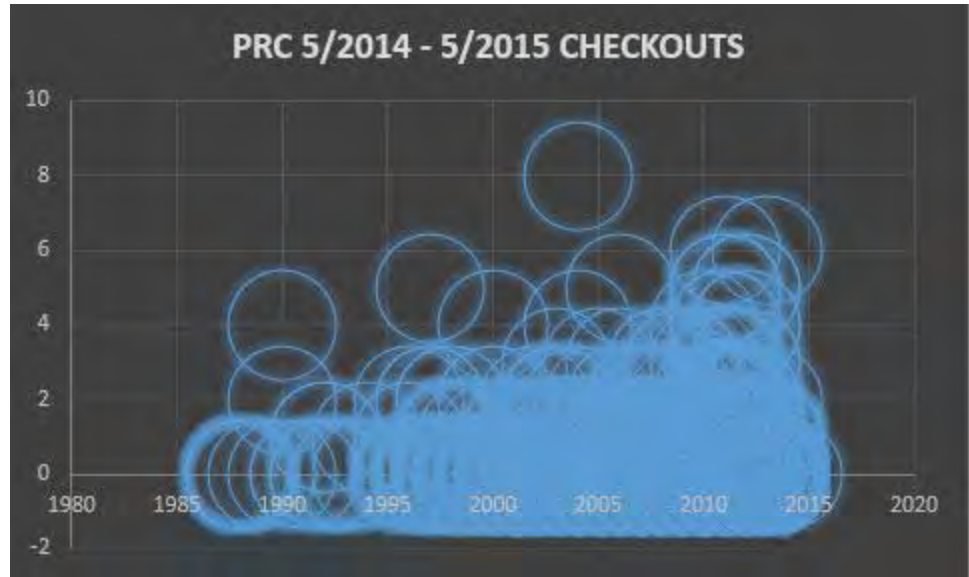


Figure 2: Each circle indicates the year an individual book was acquired (y-axis) and number of times circulated within one year (x-axis).

This assessment helped us determine which materials should be moved out of the PRC back to the general collection, where we conclude our patrons expect to find older fiction, or are more likely to seek it out for specific research purposes, rather than spontaneous recreational reading.



Figure 3: PRC Loans by Patron Group
 *UO Undergraduates includes patron types: UO Undergraduate, UO Distance Ed Undergrad, and UO Honors Student. **UO Graduates & GTFs includes patron types: UO Graduate, UO Graduate Teaching Fellow, and UO Law Student. ***Patron Groups not included are incomparable between FY14 and FY15 due to the creation of new patron types.



As we added new purchases and weeded out the older, non-circulating titles, we conducted another assessment. Total PRC circulation for FY14 was 790 of 984 McNaughton items, at a rate of 80 percent, with 510 distinct title checkouts, or 52 percent of the collection. Compare this to our homegrown collection of relocated general collection items and purchases made specifically for the PRC. In FY15 we had 844 checkouts of 770 titles, at a rate of 110 percent, with 506 of 770 distinct titles checking out, or 66 percent of the collection. A third of the 770 titles were recent additions that did not have time to circulate before the fiscal year closed. Between FY14 and FY15 total checkouts increased 6.8 percent and the checkout rate in FY15 was 37 percent higher than in FY14. Students are the most frequent users of the collection, making up 57 percent for FY14 and 59 percent of checkouts for FY15.

One additional type of use that these charts cannot capture are in-library use statistics. The UO Libraries have not been collecting reshelving statistics for this collection, but it is known from reshelving efforts that there are items being read and moved around the library daily. Items such as comic books and graphic novels, that might be considered quicker reads and therefore more conducive to in-house reading, appear to feature heavily in the reshelving pile.


While implementing and continuing to update our PRC, the UO Libraries has made gentle attempts to discourage patrons from requesting leisure reading from other libraries via Interlibrary Loan (ILL), recommending that people instead make requests for titles to be added to this local collection. We do not have any easy method for separating out ILL requests for fiction, nor for identifying leisure reading vs. fiction used for research, so we do not have statistics to demonstrate an impact in that realm. Anecdotally, however, we can speculate that the dozens of check-outs each for highly popular titles might have otherwise been attempted through ILL if we had not been providing the copies we did. For instance, since acquiring *The Fault in Our Stars* in September 2014, the Knight PRC copy has checked out three times to local patrons, and was sent out through Summit (the Orbis-Cascade Alliance ILL service) once, and the Law Library's PRC copy was loaned out an additional nine times to local patrons. Though these numbers may seem low relative to circulation statistics at a public library, these are phenomenal rates for books in an academic library, especially considering our lengthy loan periods.

Current Iteration and Future Plans

Our current plan for the PRC was implemented for FY15. With additional funding in FY16 the intention is to continually add new books and slowly return the general stacks books to their regular location. As of now the collection is made up of 458 books from the general collection and 312 new purchases, with dozens more in process and hundreds more on order. When the first wave of new material arrived, 300 low-circulating items from the transitional collection were returned to their original location in the general stacks in FY15. Once we acquire enough material to keep the shelves bountiful, as the books cease circulating they will be replaced with new purchases, and potentially removed from the Libraries' collections. Since the collection is meant to be ephemeral and ever-popular, the paperbacks will be recycled as they wear out.

We will continue promoting the collection to campus via bulletin boards, student groups, and other marketing tactics. Space in our library and university at large is a constant topic of discussion, and we will revisit this aspect of the initial student request as the climate allows. Our experience wielding the UO Libraries' Popular Reading Collection mirrors both



the frenzy of the zeitgeist and ironically labyrinthine complexity of the library. The collection is nevertheless redeemed by the continued interest, the increased circulation, and congruity with other campus ventures. It has been a valuable learning experience on all fronts to develop and revise the concept and implementation of the PRC, and it has been rewarding to problem-solve and watch the fruits of our labor be harvested by eager community members. We can expect that our eager community members are also being helped in their other scholarly pursuits. In reading for leisure, they are potentially improving their reading on all fronts. For, as Neil Gaiman, a strong proponent of libraries, said in 2013, “To discover that reading per se is pleasurable. Once you learn that, you’re on the road to reading everything.” 

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Meeting Patrons Where They Are:

Experimenting With Shelf Arrangement, Community Service Points, and Non-traditional Collections

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In recent months, Hillsboro Public Library has been reevaluating many of our services to patrons, looking for ways to better connect with readers in the library and throughout the community. This article talks about some of the ideas we have implemented as we move toward more non-traditional services and create more opportunities to take our services outside of our buildings.

Picture Books Collection

When little kids come into the library to look for books, they don't ask for particular authors the way adults do. What they want are books about dinosaurs, animals, trains, or princesses. And what their parents want are simple books for toddlers, or stories about starting preschool or becoming an older sibling. Yet our standard arrangement of picture books by author can frustrate and overwhelm the children and their parents. In our quest to make things easy for our patrons, and in support of our early literacy goals which seek to create new readers, we decided that we should reorganize our picture books from a standard author arrangement to the way kids actually look for them: by subject.

After a trip to the Seattle area to take a look at their collection, we are modeling our reorganization on King County Library System's picture books by subject, with a few additions and changes. We chose 17 subject categories, each with its own colored label. The label on the book will only contain the name of the genre, though our matching shelf labels will also include a representative picture.

But why stop with picture books? We also have an easy nonfiction collection and a DVD collection which include the same subject matter geared to the same audience. Wouldn't it be great if preschoolers could find ALL the material on dogs rather than just the fiction books? We think so. That's why we're also going to add those collections into our picture book subject areas.

Because there are a lot of picture books on some of our subjects, and because we still would like to take advantage of the subject arrangement provided by the Dewey Decimal System, our new labels will not cover up the existing author or call number labels that are currently on our materials. Instead they will be placed above them, so that library staff and patrons can still find the exact book they want quickly by call number. Arrangement within each subject will be fiction by author, then nonfiction by Dewey, then DVD.

We plan to process one subject at a time, starting with dinosaurs (because dinosaurs are awesome!) We have built record sets in our ILS to which we can add ideas for other subjects as books are evaluated, so we don't have to evaluate an item twice. After catalogers edit item records to add the new subject prefix, they will be placed on carts for pages to apply the new labels before the books head back to the shelf to begin their new, more discoverable life.

Exploring New Methods of Access

We shouldn't just think of improving access for patrons in house, but also in our communities. We know convenience and access is paramount for patrons, but that most of us cannot possibly expand hours or locations in order to meet the expressed demand of our communities for access to our resources.

In Hillsboro, we decided to explore improving access through two means: first, by installing a library vending machine in downtown Hillsboro, and second, through adding a traveling "library living room" for outreach and community events.



Our vending machine, named the Book-O-Mat to harken back to the automat days, is located on the plaza of Hillsboro's City Hall, the Civic Center. In addition to serving patrons in downtown Hillsboro, the Book-O-Mat provides easy access to library materials—including the ability to browse and download from our ebook collections—for city staff, as well as for the large number of staff and visitors to the Washington County offices located across the street. The Book-O-Mat, manufactured by MK Solutions, will provide access to approximately 400 books and DVDs, all of which will be new and popular materials.

Our mobile library, called the Library on the Loose, is a fold-out cart with shelves for items, plus benches for patrons to use while browsing or reading. The Library on the Loose is made by the UNI Project (<http://www.theuniproject.org/>) and can hold up to 250 items, although for most events we will take far fewer than that. We plan to take the Library on the Loose to community celebrations, school sites, parks, and many other places. The collection will be specifically selected to match each event that we are attending. People who visit the Library on the Loose can check out the items, get a library card, and talk to library staff. We want it to be a full service library wherever we take it.

We're not alone in these experiments, of course: book vending machines like the ones we are used to for candy and snacks have been popular in Canada, including in the capital of Ottawa and in Toronto, where the library there is (Deschamps, 2015). Larger kiosk machines, like our Book-O-Mat, have been popular in Asia and in Europe for a long time. Books promoted via bicycle caught the attention of many when rolled out at The Seattle Public Library in 2013 ("Books on Bikes," 2015). The Free Library of Philadelphia offers a digital collection in one of their main commuter train stations, where users can download books directly via QR code and access the library's podcast collection (Michelle S., 2013). Neighbors to the north, the King County Library System outside Seattle and the Fort Vancouver Regional Library, both offer unmanned library locations, accessed by library card, at the Redmond Ridge (About the Redmond Ridge Library Express, 2014) location and the Yacolt (Yacolt, n.d.) location, respectively.

There's much to be said for exploring new ways to bring the library to patrons.

Expansion and Branding of Library of Things

The first line of our mission statement reads: "The mission of the Hillsboro Public Library is to provide materials and services to help community residents of all ages and cultural backgrounds to meet their informational, educational, professional, and recreational needs." In our view, it makes a lot of sense to provide our community with all manner of items to help them learn new skills and discover their world.

In last winter's issue of OLAQ, we described our first forays into moving beyond traditional books and media, into collecting items which fostered creativity, connection, and lifelong learning in our community. We started with LEGO, Arduino kits, and bakeware. In the spring, we started working on the next phase of what has become our Library of Things. We did some research, developed some policies, and created a brand for our new collections.


At the beginning of the summer we launched a kitchen gadget collection, including items such as Popsicle molds, tortilla presses, deep fryers, canning kits, cherry pitters, food dehydrators, and ice cream makers. We visited the local farmer's market to talk with the community about the possibilities of using and preserving the produce they were buying with the help of the library's new collection. People were very excited about our new Things—particularly the ice cream maker, which as of this writing has 41 people on the holds list.



Because of the local high-tech industry we also have a lot of interest in new technology, so we started circulating Finch robots, OzoBots, littleBits, MaKey MaKey Kits, Intel Galileo microcontrollers, and snap circuit kits as well. So far, those seem to be even more popular than the kitchen gadgets, and programming surrounding this collection is well-attended.

Summer is also a great time to learn a new sport or to explore the outdoors. To that end we started an outdoor recreation collection: croquet, horseshoe, and badminton sets; beach kits of sand toys, kites and beach balls; and kits for discovering birds and insects.

In the fall we are hoping to expand the Library of Things even further, to include hand and power tools.

Response to these new ideas has been extremely positive in the Hillsboro community. We hear from patrons over and over again that they are surprised by what we have and where we now offer services. The Library of Things is seeing increased usage as word spreads about it, and we hope to continue growing our presence outside our buildings by creating partnerships with local organizations and taking the Library on the Loose to wherever people are gathered. 

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Early Learning @ the Library:

A Production in Three Acts

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HEATHER MCNEIL

ACT ONE. Libraries become leaders in the promotion of early literacy skills and activities. We are the champions of encouraging parents and care providers to read, talk, rhyme, play and write with their young children. We role model at storytime the many ways to make reading aloud fun, while being focused on skills such as phonological awareness, letter knowledge, and print motivation. Storytime is no longer just about reading aloud.

ACT TWO. Libraries embrace STEM. Librarians read information books at storytime, and set up stations for preschoolers to explore concepts such as texture, size, addition and subtraction, and construction. Yeah, LEGO's! Young children have the opportunity to discover what floats (or not), look at objects through magnifying glasses, and build structures out of marshmallows and toothpicks (with parental guidance for the sharp points!) Libraries aren't just about books, but about discovery, learning, thinking, creating. And they make sure that the arts are continued through puppetry, crafts, dance and play. STEM becomes STEAM and storytime is no longer just about literacy.

ACT THREE. Library staff begins to think, "what if?" What if the library offered learning opportunities that weren't restricted to a certain time? What if children can play, explore, and discover every time they visit the library? What if nonusers become users because they just want to hang out with their young children at the library? What if the idea that the library is a quiet place becomes obsolete and the library becomes an active, engaging, fun place? What if early learning IS the library?

Deschutes Public Library advanced through each one of these acts, with the Grand Finale (at least for now) being the installation of early learning spaces at each of our libraries. Children don costumes, sell items at a market, make pizza and tacos, and build giant block constructions that make a satisfying BOOM when knocked over. They explore rhymes and letters under their feet and in their hands, they work a cash register, they compose music, and they figure out which shape goes through which opening. All the while they are building vocabulary, increasing their letter knowledge, practicing math and writing, and learning



essential skills for kindergarten readiness such as sharing and taking turns. They're also developing the belief that the library is exactly where they want to be.

When we began the early learning spaces we started small and simple. Each library received a free standing puppet stage with puppets, and an "imagination station," which is similar to a puppet stage in design but serves a different purpose. These were paid for with library funds, as well as a grant from the Oregon Community Foundation, and donations from the Friends of the Libraries. We also sought community sponsors, a business or organization that would give us \$500 for six months of having their name and logo prominently featured on top of the Imagination Station. We used the money to create the sign, as well as purchase manipulatives that related to the business. Our first sponsor was Eberhard's Dairy in Redmond, and the children had a blast pretending to make ice cream sundaes, trying on a cow costume, and "selling" dairy products to customers. Other sponsors included Mazatlan Mexican Restaurant, High Country Disposal, Ace Hardware, the Sisters Folk Festival, and Schoolhouse Produce. These have all proven to be excellent community partnerships.

It quickly became apparent that these additions to the children's areas were very popular, and resulted in what we wanted—parental interaction, play, creativity and learning. So we began thinking about Act Three, Scene Two. What if? What if the space was more?

We began researching the possibility of expanding the early learning spaces into more of a mini children's museum, with panels, play houses, and more advanced manipulatives. Cathy Zraggen from the La Pine Library attended a PLA Conference and discovered at the exhibits that Gressco (<http://www.gresscoltd.com/>), whom we knew only for its DVD cases, also sold—ta dah!—early learning space structures that matched our vision. Who knew?

Meanwhile, we pursued funding. Ah, yes, the proverbial road block. Who pays for all this? Luckily, we have a Library Foundation, as well as the Friends groups in each of our communities who donate money to the Foundation for our Youth Services Initiatives and other library services. Each early learning space has cost \$15,000–\$18,000, and that includes the panels from Gressco, comfortable furniture for reading aloud or observing children at play, a rhyming or alphabet rug, and the manipulatives—puzzles, alphabet discovery bags



(<http://tinyurl.com/q6c8jes>), giant construction blocks, letter boxes (<http://tinyurl.com/przbxgg>), costumes, etc. One of the panels serves as an Imagination Station so we continued the sponsorships and have added, among others, Papa Murphy's Pizza, Longboard Louie's, and SCOOTR (a motorcycle club), to the list. We're currently creating a list of all the sponsorships we've had, and the related manipulatives, and will be rotating those every six months between the libraries.



Early learning spaces are now in three of our libraries, and we'll be adding two more this year. Staff at each library figures out the panels they want, and the design. I particularly like the one at East Bend because they separated the panels that are for the youngest from the more active panels for the older. The spaces, which we call Mango's House (named for our early literacy mascot, Mango Monkey) are busy, busy,



busy all the time. One of our greatest pleasures was noting that, after storytime, children no longer make a bee line for the computer games, but head for Mango's House and interactive fun and learning with Mom, Grandfather, Babysitter and friends. When I recently visited Mango's House at the Downtown Bend Library I noticed a four-year-old girl making a pizza (<http://www.amazon.com/Melissa-Doug-167-Pizza-Party/dp/B0000658L4>), intently placing the triangular slices in the right direction. I thought she might like to serve her creation, so I stopped and asked if I could have a slice. She looked up at me, visibly startled, and with wide eyes said very seriously, "I'll have to ask my mother." There was no question in her mind that her pizza was *real* and she wasn't going to give it to just anyone!

When we began Act One, Scene Two, we did a lot of behind-the-scenes research, visiting children's museums and other early learning spaces. The advice they gave us was invaluable, so here's what we've learned to help you toward your Opening Act:

1. Train staff! Before the early learning space is completed, talk with all staff, especially those who will be shelving in close proximity, about why these belong in libraries. There are several excellent articles you can refer to for the high points, such as "Design to Learn By" (<http://tinyurl.com/oczucgy>) by Sarah Bayliss, and the "Growing Young



Minds” (http://www.ims.gov/about/early_learning.aspx) report from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. Saroj Ghoting’s website, “Early Literacy in the Library Environment” (<http://www.earlylit.net/environments/>) is an invaluable resource about libraries who have added early learning components.

2. Train staff on expectations for the space. For instance, we don’t allow parents to leave the area, but we don’t intervene if Mom is texting while Susie is playing. We might wish for a different scenario, but we let that one go. However, we do get involved, and ask for the parent’s help, if a child is doing anything that is unsafe, such as throwing toys or jumping off furniture.
3. Make sure there are plenty of books close to the early learning space, so there’s a clear connection between literacy and learning.
4. Figure out how you’re going to clean the toys. We use volunteers who spray them with a mild cleaning solution (<http://www.kdl.org/kids/go/PLA2012>) that we learned about from the Kent District Library.
5. Determine a schedule for picking up toys. We tell staff that once during their desk shift (one hour or two hours) they should visit the space and put toys away into their baskets. However, we do not constantly patrol the area, making sure that everything is always in its place. Exploration and discovery is what it’s all about, so if a letter box ends up in the doll house, it’s OK!
6. I can’t say this enough. Be prepared for more noise, and consider that when you purchase the toys. Do they squeak, clatter, play a tune? Our large plastic construction blocks are very, very popular, but also very, very loud, as mentioned earlier. I’d recommend foam blocks (<http://tinyurl.com/oq33dln>). Make sure staff understands there will be additional commotion and noise because playing, sometimes with great energy, is how children learn.
7. We do make occasional announcements at storytime reminding parents to be sure that “big kids” allow “little kids” to join in the fun. There’s a difference between a 5-year-old and a toddler, and sometimes the older ones are a bit possessive or careless. But then, I think you’d see that at any playground.
8. It seems to work best if you’re able to have spaces divided according to the age of use. Our East Bend Library has a great layout, where the kitchenette, doll house, magnet board and market are in one section for the older kids, and the toddlers’ and infants’ area has more open space with a mat and panels to crawl through, or sort shape blocks. (By the way, the mats get dirty quickly, so order one that is a dark color.)



We placed a notebook close to the early learning spaces, and asked customers to tell us what they think about Mango's House. Here are some of the comments, which I think say all that needs to be said.

"We love coming here! Thanks for serving our community's kids! Their minds are growing!"

"Thanks for letting my son and I read and play together. We love it here. It's a safe fun invironment [sic] to hang out and wait for my other son to get out of school."

"This is perfect for kids to learn how to play quietly in a library. It really is a wonderful addition and my kids enjoy comming [sic] to play and read and learn. It's fun to see what store is posted next. A fun way to teach my little guy healthy foods."

"Marques loves to come to library! Great place to meet friends, play and learn! Play area is awesome!"

"Love love love your awesome play area. Kids using imagination nothing better."



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