New Britain Kids Get Ready To Read

by Douglas Lord

"C'naï see? C'naï see?" squeaky, overlapping voices insist; twenty faces press inward, ever closer.

It's a good thing these voices and faces are attached to sweet little three- and four-year old boys and girls; otherwise this would be a snippet from a nightmare rather than the happy dream that it is.

These wee ones attend the Jane Johnson Memorial Center Head Start satellite classroom in New Britain's Mount Pleasant housing project, and their demands are to see the pictures in Henrietta and Paul Strickland's Dinosaur Roar. The preschool's safe, comfortable atmosphere is reinforced by four circling teachers who, despite don't-mess-with-me eyebrows, smile at the children's cheer and energy.

Today's theme is dinosaurs, and New Britain PL programmer Laura Palasek is doing more than a simple story time. She is also embedding emergent literacy techniques from PLA's Every Child Ready to Read @ Your Library program, recently echoed in the state library's It's Never Too Early awareness campaign.

Responsive and emotive, Palasek is a magnet for the children's attention. Using rhyming, predicting, open-ended queries, and conceptualizing, she calls attention to separate syllables and emphasizes alliterative sounds to help develop the language skills of these children.

After the story, the boys and girls do the dinosaur-pokey—kinesthetic learning cleverly disguised as a fun dance. The kids then get some practice at modulating their behavior—quickly going from wild to calm—as they sit crisscross applesauce. They immediately beseech Laura to pull more stories from the cache in her backpack.

This program, granted $20,000 in LSTA funds last May, is part of the library's Ready, Set, Read! New Britain Kids: A Collaborative Project to Increase Reading Readiness of Preschoolers, brainchild of children's services head, Nancy Jordan.

Jordan is partnering with four agencies—Head Start, the school readiness program, and preschools at the Boys and Girls Club and YWCA—to raise reading readiness levels through emergent literacy programming. The project also loans deposit collections to partners, provides parent-teacher training sessions, and includes class visits to the library.

Forty percent of New Britain schoolchildren speak a language other than English at home; 53% of the city's children don't go to preschool. Jordan's sense of

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OBERSION Make Your Library a “Third Place”

It's good to be back! Many, many years ago, I had the privilege of writing for this newsletter in a Shana Alexander/Jack Kilpatrick style (those of you old enough to remember the earlier days of Sixty Minutes will recognize those names) opposite Bill Uricchio. He was “Jack” (the conservative) and I was “Shana” (the exact opposite). We sparred on such topics as whether or not Madonna’s book, Sex, belonged in libraries. The experience was fun and, hopefully, provocative.

Since moving from the center of the state, where I was the library director in Newington, to Westport in 1998, I've felt a bit disconnected from CLA and hope to reconnect by sharing some of my thoughts and opinions in this column. Unlike the last time I wrote for the newsletter, we now have email and I welcome feedback, and therefore connections with readers at mblewes@westportlibrary.org.

Speaking of connections, my latest discovery is the concept that sociologist Ray Oldenberg puts forth—that of “third place.” No, it's not the person who wins the bronze medal in a contest, but the place after home and work that can round out and become essential in our lives.

When Oldenberg first wrote about third place in 1989 in The good place: cafes, coffee shops, community centers, beauty parlors, general stores, bars, hangouts and how they get you through the day, he wasn’t thinking about libraries, as one of the key ingredients to third place was the ability to have a conversation. He was thinking about pubs and town squares and shopping malls and coffee shops. He was probably thinking about the Cheers bar—a place where “everybody knows your name,” you were recognized, a place that was inexpensive to be in, a place where you would find a variety of people who were all welcome. I hope if he rewrote the book today, he’d include libraries as the premiere example of third place.

We’re in the midst of planning for better space at the Westport Public Library. What is most clear in contrast to the last time the library was designed is the need for spaces where people can gather together informally. That doesn’t mean we’re abandoning quiet spaces for people who need to concentrate, but as circulation is...

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Tuned Out: Why Americans Under 40 Don’t Follow the News

by Dafyd T.Z. Mindich (Oxford University Press, 2005)

Can you name at least four justices of the current U.S. Supreme Court?
Who is the attorney general of the United States?
What are the names of the two senators that represent you in Congress?

Are these questions easy for you to answer? They are not easy for most young Americans, as David Mindich found out when he asked them. Mindich gathers together his own research and other modern studies on who watches, listens and reads the news. He concludes that today’s youth do not follow the news and that they are not knowledgeable about current events.

It’s easy to believe that youth do not watch network TV news. Keep track of the advertisements on these shows and you might think all of America is chronically ill and suffering from a host of physical and emotional problems that range from constipation to impotence. Actually, most Americans that watch network TV news are just old. Apparently, unlike the young, old people suffer less from ignorance and more from illness. So too, most Americans that read newspapers are old, or at least older. Would you feel better knowing that even if the young are not reading newspapers, at least they are catching up on the news via the Internet? Well, you can start feeling bad again because the young are not keeping up with the news in any medium. Most young people surveyed by Mindich couldn’t name even one Supreme Court justice.

So, what do young people do all day on the Internet? Mostly they trade e-mails and instant messages. They use the World Wide Web for what it does best: deliver information on specific specialty topics like mountain bikes, music groups, and celebrities. Young people use the Internet primarily for satisfying personal wishes. Rarely, do they use it to satisfy the demands of good citizenship.

This aspect of modern life influences TV, radio, and newspapers as well. The media industry knows what sells and what doesn’t. It also understands that the young are a prime demographic group for advertisers. So, if hard international news does not sell newspapers or increase viewer ratings, then the answer is to replace hard news with reports on celebrities, violence, and sports. We consume less real news and more entertainment chitchat. And, the irony of having such an uninformed populace, young and old alike, is that most people still seem to have an opinion on everything!

If you doubt this, just listen to call-in radio. Still, an elected “government supported by an uninformed citizenry is not a democracy, it is a sham.”

Do we care if the average age of those watching or reading hard news keeps rising? Do we care if people under age forty never read newspapers or watch programs that analyze current events? Does a decline in serious journalism matter? Mindich argues, as many have before, that democracy depends on the work of good, independent journalists. Who will be our society’s watchdog over political affairs when we do not take the time to do it ourselves? Democracy suffers unless fair-minded and independent journalists are allowed to pursue inquiry without fear of retribution from those with financial or political power.

Further, Mindich argues, good journalism costs money and we should be ready to pay for it. If we are not willing to pay the price, then we can expect more advertisements and more cozy deals between media outlets and private industry. We can expect less skepticism of government reporting and even less investigative journalism. Of course, we should then expect less democracy.

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Spanish Language Outreach Program

The Connecticut State Library is participating with WebJunction in a Spanish Language Outreach Program funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. The program begins with a training institute during which trainers, hired by the State Library, will become familiar with the program's curriculum. Connecticut's trainers are: Nancy Moscoso-Guzman (New Haven PL), Kellie O'Donnell-Bobadilla (Hartford PL) and Elissa Scudder (Danbury PL). The trainers will then present local workshops for Connecticut library staff, teaching them how to develop an outreach action plan based on the program's curriculum. The workshops will offer information about proven marketing techniques, understanding cultural differences, providing technology training, and partnering with local community organizations serving Spanish speakers. Participants need attend only one training session.

Workshops are planned for: Friday, March 10, Mitchell Branch, New Haven Free PL (limit: 15 people); and Thursday, March 30, CT State Library (limit: 20 people). Sessions run from 9:00 am to 4:30 pm. Lunch will be provided; there is no fee for the workshop. Additional sessions will be scheduled in April – August.

To register, go to the appropriate date on the CSI Continuing Education Calendar http://24.123.220.34/cslib/evenanced/eventcalendar.asp and follow the instructions there. For more information contact Kris Abery at kabery@cslib.org.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

I Confess.

I'm a Frederick Busch Groupie

When I was a brand new librarian in Central New York State, I found that reader's advisory was a huge part of my job. Up to that point in my life, what with getting a college education and other pressing concerns, I mainly read books on the history of wars and revolutions. But to be effective at reader's advisory, I found I had to switch gears.

In putting aside Stephen Ambrose, Barbara Tuchman and Richard Ketchum, I discovered some amazing fiction authors, such as Louise Erdrich (and Michael Dorris), Iris Murdoch, and Wallace Stegner. But when I stumbled upon Frederick Busch's Harry and Catherine: A Love Story, I felt I had discovered a unique author who spoke directly to me. The heroine was strong, and the hero was sympathetic and likeable. Even though the ending disappointed me, I understood that it could be no other way; it reflected real life.

I recommended Frederick Busch to many of my friends, thinking that he was my discovery. Then several years ago, at an ALA conference in San Francisco, I decided to attend an author breakfast at the very last minute. In fact, I was going primarily to make contact with a publisher regarding future author visits to my library and didn't even bother to see who was speaking. I was in for a treat.

But first, I ran into some Connecticut friends and ended up sitting with Sandy Ruoff and Lana Ferguson from the Guilford Public Library. Sandy started bubbling about how excited she was that her favorite author, Frederick Busch, was going to speak. While part of me was delighted that I shared the same favorite author with someone I knew and respected, there was this nagging thought: Wait a minute! He's my favorite author to share with others. How did she find out about him anyway?

As I was thinking these thoughts, author Dave Eggers went to the podium to read a delightful piece about an imaginary librarian who continued to bring him pieces of information that he was trying very hard to forget. But first, he started to gush (there really is no other word) about how thrilled he was to be on the same platform and in the same program as one of his favorite authors—you guessed it—Frederick Busch!

By now I am over the fact that I didn't discover Frederick Busch and that my one-person reader's advisory campaign doesn't really account for his success. He earned that by creating memorable characters and interesting plots. Instead, I am encouraging all of you to read North as our conference one book. Busch will be discussing this work at the CLA annual conference during the author luncheon on Tuesday, May 9. I would further recommend, if you have time, that you also read Girls, which features an academic library director who faces a situation similar to the recent event at the Newton Free Library (MA), where FBI agents attempted to seize library computers without a warrant.

Both novels feature "Jack," an everyman hero. I have often wondered if Busch chose the name Jack because of the Jack folktales in which an unassuming underdog, placed in difficult circumstances, is able to prevail. I can't wait to ask that question. I also want to discuss his women protagonists, who are often strong, and a little bit mysterious, and very likeable. And then I think I want to ask about how he can, in one throwaway line, describe a personality or reveal a self-perception.

Once you have a chance to read, or re-read, these books, you will have your own questions. Questions, comments, or as in my case pure idolatry, register for CLA's annual conference, "Relax Your Body & Energize Your Mind," and join Frederick Busch and me for lunch on May 9.

Contact Alice Knapp at aknapp@fergusonlibrary.org.

Connecticut Libraries solicits articles, news, opinions, and photographs about matters of interest to the state's library community. Send contributions to:

David Kapp, Editor
dkapp@aol.com
Phone: (860) 647-0697
Fax: (860) 647-7826
4 Lynwood Drive
Bolton, CT 06043

Deadline: Second Friday of the month.

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President Alice Knapp read thank you letters for CLA contributions to the Nutmeg Book Award ($1,250) and the Freedom to Read Foundation ($500). She reported on her trip to ALA Midwinter where Judith Krug accepted the Downs Intellectual Freedom Award on behalf of John Doe of Connecticut.

Treasurer Jan Fisher noted a balance of $36,758 in checking, $117,075 in investments, for total assets of $153,833.

ADA Mary Engels reported that the ADA Committee and CSL would co-sponsor a two-part workshop on April 5 and July 18 on how to write an ADA plan. The committee plans to conduct an on-line survey to locate adaptive technology equipment in CT libraries.

ALA Jay Johnston reported on his advocacy for school media specialists at ALA Midwinter, advising them to become interveners in the 2007 congressional review of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act. He also reported on the “65 cent solution,” an initiative urging that 65 cents of every education tax dollar be spent “in the classroom” and purporting to increase classroom spending without increasing taxes. This initiative could result in a drastic reduction, or elimination, of support for school libraries. Mario Gonzalez, director of Greenwich Library, was elected to the ALA Executive Board for the 2006-2009 term. ALA dues are scheduled to increase 10% per year over the next three years.

CLC Alice Knapp reported that CLC and CLA are discussing plans to move the CLA office to CLC’s Middletown office.

Awards Ramona Harten reminded the Board that the deadline for nominations is March 31, 2006. No submissions have been received yet.

CEMA Frances Nadeau announced that Bob Hibson (Bridgeport) and Mary Shukle (Hartford) are new representatives to the CLA Legislative Committee. The CT State Department of Education approved the “Information and Technology Literacy Framework,” aligning the state’s goals, standards, and principals for student learning with national standards.

Conference 2006 Betsy Bray noted that the “One Book” for the conference is North by Frederick Busch, who will also be a luncheon speaker.

CSL Sharon Breitnscheck announced that the Historical Hartford Courant is up and running through iConn. She distributed a flyer with dates for workshops on the Spanish Language Outreach Program to train library staff to better serve Spanish-speaking patrons.

Editorial Barbara Bailey distributed sample CLA logo designs produced by Miranda Creative and asked for feedback.

Friends Mary Engels reported the committee is planning three workshops on “Sharing Among Friends” at the end of April at three locations around the state. Anne Farrow, author of Complicity, will be the “Friends Champion” for April’s Friends Month.

Intellectual Freedom Peter Chase will attend the Lawful Library Conference in Chicago regarding First Amendment law. He will then organize and conduct similar conferences in Connecticut. Faith Middleton interviewed him regarding censorship.

Legislative Peter Ciparelli noted completion of the distribution of ConnectCard marketing materials and plans for the February 15 Legislative Breakfast. Approximately 100 letters were sent to CLA legislators asking individuals to continue to serve.

Membership Pan Najarlan reported 947 current members.

NELA Mary Etel reported that Counterparts Day, a gathering of officers, committee chairs, and interested individuals from New England library organizations would be held July 20-21. NELA is seeking nominations for the Emerson Greenaway Award, honoring an individual who has made significant contributions to libraries in more than one New England state.

Nominations Alice Knapp presented a partial slate of 2006-2007 CLA officers: VP President-Elect, Barbara Bailey; Treasurer, Jan Fisher; ALA Representative, Jay Johnston; Regional Representatives, TBA.

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Connecticut’s “John Doe” received the 2005 Robert B. Downs Intellectual Freedom Award at ALA Midwinter in San Antonio. Judith Krug, director of the ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom, accepted the award on his behalf. Here are some of her remarks.

It is a bittersweet honor to accept the Downs Award on behalf of “John Doe,” the Connecticut member of the American Library Association who has bravely chosen to defend his library users’ privacy. For while I am honored to accept this award on John Doe’s behalf, I am also angry that John Doe—whoever he, she, or it—is not able to be here at this reception that honors his professionalism and his commitment to the core values that define the profession of librarianship. I am appalled that our country’s laws silence John Doe and require him to remain anonymous for standing by his professional ethics, for standing up for the principle that it is nobody’s business what you read, or listen to, or look at in the library—but yours. I applaud John Doe, and look forward to the time when we can all thank him personally for his choice to fight for his professional principles and his users’ rights.

I hope you will help give John Doe a voice—to say on his behalf what he cannot say in the public for fear of prosecution. Call your congressional representatives and urge them to vote for meaningful changes to the USA PATRIOT Act that will preserve our civil liberties and restore due process protections. With our collective voices, we can make sure John Doe’s efforts are not in vain—that his message is heard.
Fairfield Memorial Library first opened its doors on December 27, 1876 in the Fairfield Academy, a local private school. Spearheaded by Morris W. Lyons, a teacher and library visionary, the organization saw its collection grow to 677 volumes with 81 “subscribers” borrowing 1,483 books within its first years of operation.

In 1897 the Library Board, in response to the increasing size of the collection and its burgeoning use by residents, established a Building and Site Fund. By 1899 the library had acquired a site at its current 1080 Old Post Road location and was ready for construction pending the conclusion of its fundraising campaign.

C.T. Beardsley, Jr. of Bridgeport was chosen as the architect. Initially, a Romanesque design was selected, but the Library Board rejected this in favor of a colonial style felt to be more in keeping with Fairfield and its historic past. A two-story building with three floors of stacks was proposed so that additions could be easily integrated into the facility in years to come.

Construction began in 1902, culminating in the dedication of the new library on June 11, 1903. Noted Yale professor William Lyon Phelps declared, “The library . . . will be thoroughly appreciated . . . by being used, and a spirit of freedom will dominate the management of this library; no books will be tabooed . . .”

In 1929, Norman Isham, a noted Rhode Island architect, designed a new wing for the new cramped and overcrowded library. This addition was completed in 1936, introducing substantial new space that was then loaned to the Fairfield Historical Society for its operations. The society utilized this space until 1955 when it moved to its own facility.

Another construction project was undertaken in 1929 with the erection of an office building adjacent to the new addition. This facility, owned by the library, was intended to generate rental income for the library as public funding was limited.

By the end of World War II, the library was encountering a variety of challenges to its future success. Office space was inadequate, seating was tight, and the book collection was limiting the confines of the building and was unable to accommodate the growth of student and adult research needs. The library lacked recordings and films as well as programming for children and adults, and the collection was inadequate to properly run a library for a town the size of Fairfield.

In response to these conditions, the Library Board engaged a consultant in 1946 to study the library’s condition and recommend a plan of action. His plan included eight forward thinking and thoughtful recommendations to rectify the library’s problems. Of these, the most revolutionary was the proposal to merge and reorganize the Fairfield Memorial Library, Stratfield Library Association and the Pequot Library, all local and independent libraries, into a municipal library fully funded with tax dollars.

After many years of negotiation between the Town of Fairfield and the Library Board, a Special Act of the General Assembly was enacted on July 16, 1949, amending the Fairfield Town Charter to allow for the creation of a municipal library. Fairfield Public Library, composed of Fairfield Memorial Library and the Stratfield Library Association, formally began operations on June 23, 1950. The Pequot Library chose to remain independent.

Another enhancement to the library’s physical plant related to the gradual adaptation of its office building for use as a children’s library and staff office space. Begun in 1953, this lengthy process was only completed in 1970 due to issues relating to long-term tenant leases. In 1959, a sizable addition was attached to the original 1903 library building, allowing it to continue to grow in relation to the growth of the town.

In 1978, the library embarked on yet another building project, once again in response to lack of space for the staff and public. This effort nearly doubled the size of the library—to 52,000 sq ft—featuring a large addition as well as a renovation of the existing facility and the office building, which was integrated into the building complex.

As the library’s centennial grew near, it was obvious that yet another expansion and renovation was necessary. Problems relating to overcrowding of materials and staff, aging infrastructure, and changing programmatic needs drove this decision. Community support for this expensive project was never in doubt as the funding request, once fully engaged, sailed through the political process in near unanimity.

Construction began in 2004 and was completed 13 months later. On July 11, 2005, the library reopened to critical acclaim from the community and the media. Since then, people have flocked to the library in unprecedented numbers to use the variety of resources available in the facility as well as to tour the space.

Features of this expansion and renovation include:

- Replacement of the mechanical, electrical, plumbing and information technology infrastructure
- Compliance with fire and life safety codes, including an automatic sprinkler system and emergency lighting and fire alarm upgrades
- ADA compliance, including wider aisles for stacks and wheelchair access at circulation

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The town green reading area of Fairfield’s new children’s library is flanked by the book store and the town hall media/computer room.
ENERGIZE YOUR MIND, RELAX YOUR BODY
Connecticut Library Association 115th Annual Conference
May 8-10, 2006, Mountainside, Wallingford, CT

PRECONFERENCES MONDAY, MAY 8
Pre-Conference I: Readers' Advisory
9:00 – Noon Beginning the Readers' Advisory Conversation: Tools, Techniques, and Tips Joyce G. Saricks, author of The Readers' Advisory Guide to Genre Fiction and Readers' Advisory Service in the Public Library, will discuss the importance of readers' advisory in libraries, highlighting printed and online resources.
12:00 Lunch (included in registration fee)
1:30 – 4:30 Genrefluency: Providing Readers' Advisory to Genre Readers Diana Tixier Herald, author of Genreflacking, Fluent in Fantasy, and Strictly Science Fiction, will combine a slide show of booktalks of genre fiction with a discussion of the attributes of genre, subgenres, and themes, and how they relate to each other. Information will be provided on where to find genre specific information, research resources and some of the code words used in reviews, major awards and their significance, as well as print and online resources to help readers' advisors guide patrons to books they will enjoy.

Pre-Conference II: Rhyme Verses Rap: Poetry for Kids
9:00 – 4:00 Meet three innovative poets whose works have lots of kid appeal: Paul B. Janeczko, Patricia Hubbell, and Charles R. Smith, Jr. After their formal presentations in the morning, they will each lead a 30-minute workshop in the afternoon so you can gain further insights to each person's unique style and develop your own poetic muse. There will also autograph sessions and time for you to share your own methods for turning kids on to poetry. Lunch is included in the registration.

Pre-Conference III: Golf Tournament
Lyman Orchards Golf Club. Lunch @ 11:30 am, Tee-Off @ 12:30 pm, Reception/cash bar @ 5:30 pm, following play. Information: Kevin McCarthy 203-637-1066 or kevinm@perrotlibrary.org

TUESDAY, MAY 9
9:00 Taking the Stress Out of Managing the Library Facility Carmine J. Trotta and Marcia Trotta, authors of The Librarian's Facility Management Handbook, will provide practical advice and techniques that can assist administrators ensure that their library can function properly and support its mission.
9:00 Therapy Dogs and Library Cats: Animals in the Library Jan Adams, Fidelco Guide Dog Foundation, will explain, along with one of her four-legged trainees, how guide dogs are trained and used. Donna Kramer with Haley, and Paula Milnes with Sirius, will demonstrate how their therapy dogs are used in reading programs with children. Theresa Conley will do a visual presentation of cats that have taken up residence in the library, including Lyme Public's very own Emma.
9:00 What We Didn't Learn In Library School About Readers' Advisory Joyce G. Saricks covers what our library education has missed: how to read book reviews with an eye to appeal, how we become conversant with the reading tastes of our community, what to do when our minds go blank, and techniques for working with readers who ask about authors and genres we're not familiar with. She will also discuss how to market our collections, and how to embark on an in-depth study of a genre.

9:00 I've Got My MLS, But Where Are the Jobs? Approximately 5,000 MLS graduates enter the field each year, and about 4,100 jobs open up. Panelists Shirlene Schwartz, Library Consulting Services; Christine Donohue, Donohue Group, Inc.; Patricia Daragan, US Coast Guard Academy library Director; and Carol Harker, EBSCO, will tell you where to look and how to be creative in your job search.
9:30 BCALA-CT Selects Join us as we bring you selected Connecticut authors to inform and entertain you. Stephen Perry is director of the Connecticut Collegiate Awareness and Preparation program at Capital Community College and the self-published author of Window Pain and Naked Eating Chinese Food. The Calabash Boys is V.A. Murphy's first novel. Dr. Cynthia Barnett is a retirement lifestyle specialist and the author of Stop Singing the Blues: 10 Powerful Strategies for Hitting the High Notes In Your Life.
10:45 Award Winning Public Library Service Meet the winners of the 2006 Connecticut Excellence In Public Library Service Awards and learn how their innovative ideas can be adapted to work in your library.
10:45 Sixty Genre Books In Sixty Minutes Diana Tixier Herald will book-talk sixty books in sixty minutes to provide readers' advisors with ideas on books and authors to suggest to readers. This is a lightning fast view of what's hot in various genres. Herald is the author of Genreflacking, Teen Genreflacking, Fluent in Fantasy, and Strictly Science Fiction (co-authored with Bonnie Kunzel). She has also written articles for School Library Journal, is a reviewer for Booklist, and series editor for Libraries Unlimited's Genreflacking Series of readers' advisory guides.
11:00 John Doe vs. Gonzalez: Connecticut Challenges the Patriot Act Ann Beeson, lead ACLU attorney, is representing John Doe, a Connecticut library "entity" in a legal challenge to the Patriot Act. She will review the facts of the case that can be revealed and the legal principles at stake for libraries.
11:00 Trading Typefaces: A Library Brochure Make-over See the end product of a library brochure made over by professional graphic designers and get hints on how to make your library PR materials get looked at. Lisa Huttaline, president of LE Designers, Inc. will talk about the makeover and help you decide if hiring professionals to do your brochure may be money well spent.
11:00 Booktalking the Nutmeg Teen Books Caitlin Augusta, 2006 Nutmeg Book Award chair and assistant head of children's services at Darien Library, will booktalk the 2007 Nutmeg Nominees.
12:00 Lunch with Frederick Busch, author of North, the conference one book
1:30 The Future Is Now: The New Virtual Community Robert Berkman, editor of the "Information Advisor" newsletter will discuss the new world of mobile computing, virtual community (blogs, wikis, etc.), and objects with RFID tags.
1:30 The Good, the Bad and the Ugly In Adult Library Programming Cynde Bloom Lahy, assistant director, New Canaan Library, and Karen Ronald, director, Trumbull Library System, will share their experiences with adult programming in two very different communities, highlighting successes and reviewing pitfalls involved in connecting with authors, performers and scholars. They will suggest ways to promote your library as a cultural center and community resource.
1:45 Chair Yoga Laura Kahkonen, director, Windsor PL, and certified Kripalu yoga instructor, will lead a session of gentle stretching, breathing and relaxing.
1:30 Improving Service to the Spanish Speaking

1:30 Teen Titles: What's New and Hot Uses for Them Toby Zabinski, media specialist, Amity Regional Junior HS in Bethany, and Tanya Jackson-Smith, YA librarian, Silas Bronson Library in Waterbury, will "flash talk" new books. Sherelle Harris, head, children's services and teen outreach, South Norwalk PL, will suggest activities related to these titles.

3:30 CLA Recognition Program and Reception Join your colleagues in honoring outstanding representatives of the Connecticut library community.

4:45 CLA President's Reception

WEDNESDAY, MAY 10

8:30 CLA Business Meeting Meet the candidates for CLA offices.

9:00 The Best, and How to Get It When it comes to medical care, we demand the best. Alberta Richettelle and Judith Kronick, UConn Health Center, will identify resources that provide information about health care providers and facilities to assist individuals make informed choices about their medical care.

9:00 After AACR2: The New Cataloging Code—RDA: Resource Description and Access Considerable progress has been made on the development of a new cataloging code to replace AACR2. The new code, Resource Description and Access, is a new standard for describing and organizing resources in a digital environment. Presenter: Matthew Beacom, metadata librarian, Yale University Library

9:15 Nutmeg Nights and Other Great Ideas for Promoting the Nutmeg Book Award Caitlin Augusta and Melissa Yurechko, Nutmeg Book Award Committee, will explain how their innovative game show contest gets Darlen kids excited about reading the nominated titles. Discover new ways to motivate students to participate in Connecticut's children's choice book award program.

9:15 Energize Your Mind: Working with Emotional Intelligence Organizational development consultant Maureen Sullivan will explain what emotional intelligence is and what the key competencies are. A brief questionnaire to assess your "EI" quotient will help you identify practical ways to develop your emotional intelligence.

9:30 Connecticut State Library Update Kendall Wiggins, state librarian, provides an update on current projects, legislative news, and the state budget.

10:45 Google Takes Over the World Google is the leading search tool for finding information on the Internet. In a dynamic online environment, it offers users maps, news alerts, reference service, online communities, and is now in the content creation business with high-profile services such as Google Scholar and Google Print. Rob Favini, program director, educational services, NEILNET, will explain what this means for libraries.

11:00 ConnectCard Marketing Program Miranda Creative has designed dynamic PR marketing materials to inform patrons, legislators, and library staff about ConnectCard. Maria Miranda will discuss the progress of the campaign, and Chris Bradley, Connecticut Library Consortium, will talk about how libraries can use it.

11:00 Building Employee Teams for Commitment and Goal Achievement Chris Samulowitz and colleagues from MRC Corporation, a human resource management company, will discuss how to build and run employee teams to achieve the library's goals.

11:00 Energize Your Image Julie Foley, the Consultant of Style, says dressing is a necessity, but clothing is a commodity—70% of first impressions is visual and 30% of that is what we are wearing. Everyone creates style on a daily basis, simply by getting up and getting dressed. Studies have shown that how one looks expresses competence and reliability, and actually improves productivity. What professional, new or established, wouldn't want to use this to their advantage?

12:00 Lunch with Bill Barnes, author/illustrator of Unshelled

1:30 Relax Your Body: Managing Stress Organizational development consultant Maureen Sullivan will offer practical steps for dealing with stress and will provide an opportunity to develop your personal plan.

1:30 Living Happily—and Productively—Ever After Leaving the 9-5 workplace presents the freedom—and the challenge—to create a new life for oneself. Three retired librarians will talk about what they have chosen to do with their new liberty: Ralph Arcari, former director of the UConn Health Center Library; David Gannes, former head of collection development and reference librarian at UConn's Babbidge Library; and Joan Turner, former director of the Westport PL. Vince Juliano, former director of the Waterford PL, will moderate.

1:45 Lions and Literacy Dr. Linda K. Rath, curriculum director for "Between The Lions," the award-winning PBS children's TV series, has worked with writers and producers to deliver the research-based literacy curriculum that is the backbone of the series. Find out how television can encourage emergent readers and send them running to their local library. Get ideas for book discussion programs for kindergarten and early elementary school readers.

1:45 Extreme Website Makeover Susan Slaga and Debbie Herman, CCSU, will describe their experience redesigning the Burritt Library website with a modest budget. The session will cover planning, formulating goals and objectives, conducting focus groups, usability testing, principles of good design, and promotion, and will review web authoring and development tools as well as software for analyzing usage.

3:00 Sara Nelson, author of So Many Books, So Little Time: A Year of Passionate Reading and editor of Publisher's Weekly

Go to cla.uconn.edu for details and registration information.

This is a dress-down conference: You may be fined for wearing a suit, a tie, or high heels!
On February 5, after not being able to connect to DU MOO for a couple of days, I emailed the member of the community whose campus hosted the MOO. In return, I received this sad news:

"Yes, DU was attacked a little over a week ago seriously compromising the university's network. In talking with the system folks at Marshall [University], Tom and I have determined that perhaps our best move at this point—particularly in light of the fact that we do not have the technical support necessary to keep the system updated and secure, is to put DU to rest."

A MOO is a virtual space that not only allows people to communicate in real time, but also provides a programming language so that its inhabitants can create objects and modify their spaces. DU (Diversity University) MOO was created in 1992, before there was a graphical interface associated with the Internet, to provide an educational virtual space. It consists of a database that contains all the objects and a server that allows the database to run.

I entered the MOO world in early 1994. In November of that year, Cathy Bennett and I, library science students at the time, were talking about the demands that the Internet placed on librarians; suddenly, with minimal training, they were expected to become net experts. The idea of the Librarians Online Support Team (L.O.S.T.) was born.

One of the continuing projects undertaken by L.O.S.T. was the sponsorship of free, on-line professional development workshops and seminars available to library personnel with Internet telnet capability. Librarians did not need to leave their homes or worksites to take part in these sessions. Participants logged onto DU's live virtual campus environment from their home or work computer.

Our first workshop took place on April 3, 1995. The topic was "Using Gopher and the Internet in Reference Work," led by Linda Warden, reference and interlibrary loan librarian at the Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars Library in Washington, D.C. Looking at the list of workshops on the L.O.S.T. web page (admin.gnacademy.org:8000/~lost/projects.html), you can trace the progression of information technology. Does anyone use still gopher as a reference tool today?

A year later, in April 1996, we had a session with Betty Turlock, then president of ALA. She had this to say about the Communications Decency Act:

"ALA is the lead plaintiff in a suit challenging the constitutionality of the CDA. It makes it a crime punishable by imprisonment and fines up to $100,000 for transmitting even inadvertently information to minors that is considered indecent. The problem is that indecent is a vague term." Is this a new discussion?

A number of Connecticut librarians participated in L.O.S.T. sessions. Arlene Bielefeld offered "Let's Talk About Copyright: A Librarian's Guide to Current Issues and Concerns" at the November 1995 workshop. Our last session occurred in March 1999, when the topic was "Library Services and Instruction for Distance Learners." One of the presenters was Emily Chasse of Central Connecticut State University. What was amazing was the fact that the other two presenters were from Florida. But we all gathered in one virtual room.

Currently, the logs from those sessions are not available. I hope to have them recovered and posted to the L.O.S.T. website, I wonder if the concerns that related to distance learning in 1999 have changed in 2006.

At the CLA conference in April 1998, we presented a workshop entitled, "Librarian: Train Thyself Follow L.O.S.T. Into Cyberspace" using an Internet connection and projector, we met several librarians from around the US who demonstrated how DU MOO could be used as a platform for training. Among them were Diane Kovacs, Internet consultant and web trainer; Rick Gates, who founded the Internet Hunt; for those of you who remember those days of Gopher, Veronica, and Archie; and several other folks.

During the winter of 1995, while planning our L.O.S.T. workshops, we saw a notice for a mini-conference at Syracuse University entitled, "Beyond the Hype." I was listed as the presenter and another member of our team also attended. Part of our point was to demonstrate the role of teamwork across distances that could be obtained by using the MOO.

While working in the library on DU, I was approached by someone who needed help with a brand new IPL (Internet Public Library) MOO. As IPL MOO was developed, there was a link between the two moos; someone in either one could communicate via the 'reference desk' with someone in the other. Although the MOO is gone from IPL, it was one of the first online reference services. Today we have more sophisticated 24/7 services.

DU MOO provided exposure to brand new technology and ideas. As the Internet became graphical, a graphical interface for DU was developed called Cup-O-Mud. Although DU is now gone, this interface is still in use elsewhere.

Besides sponsoring workshops, L.O.S.T. attempted to build an online community of librarians willing to share their expertise and experience with others. This theme of community, as well as the tools that enable people to share and teach, runs through my work in the MOO world. Many of the contacts from around the world that I made at DU MOO still exist. We communicate via email, other MOOs, and have some great memories. The death of DU has made us more aware than ever of the changes in information technology over the past 12 years. Just think of where we are headed!

Isabel Danforth is director of library services, International College of Hospitality Management, Suffield.
Caroline Ward is a mentor, one of the giants on whose shoulders many children’s librarians now stand. She sees mentoring as the most important role for a department supervisor and believes that one should be highly selective in hiring, and then give people all the training, freedom, support and opportunities for growth that you can.

Caroline learned the value of mentoring from the beginning of her career at the Free Library of Philadelphia. There, she felt empowered because her children’s services supervisor supported young professionals and championed their cause to the library administration. Caroline’s early years in Philadelphia were characterized by a traditional education in children’s literature. She has carried that tradition into the 21st century with biweekly book meetings at Ferguson Library. Caroline feels that being a children’s librarian is a “great ride” offering a wide range of opportunity, from regional and statewide consulting work, to work in small rural or large urban libraries, as well as the opportunity to review books and serve on award committees. And she has done all of that.

In 2005 she received the 51st annual Grolier Foundation Award, honoring a librarian “who has made extraordinary contributions to encouraging a love of reading and books in young people.” To celebrate that occasion, Kate McClelland, assistant director and director of youth services at Pernot Memorial Library in Old Greenwich, wrote an article entitled “The Natural” for the August 2005 School Library Journal, in which she describes Caroline’s accomplishments as “legendary.” ALA’s March 2005 press release outlines her remarkable career—children’s services consultant for the State of Vermont, children’s services manager for the Nassau County Library System, serving 54 member libraries, and her current position as coordinator of youth services at the Ferguson Library in Stamford.

In addition to the day jobs, Caroline, as adjunct faculty, has taught children’s literature courses over 20 years for St. Michael’s College, Palmer School of Library and Information Science, and now at Pratt Institute. Caroline has served as president of ALA’s Association for Library Service to Children, and served on the United States Board on Books for Young People. She has chaired and served on numerous award and book evaluation committees, including the New York Library Association Empire State Award, Bologna Book Faire Ragazzi Prize, National Book Award, and Boston Globe/Horn Book Award. Caroline chaired the Newbery Committee in 1990, the year that Lois Lowry’s Number the Stars was chosen.

But it is her work on the Pura Belpré Award of which Caroline is clearly the most proud. This award, established in 1996, is presented to “a Latino/Latina writer and illustrator whose work best portrays, affirms, and celebrates the Latino cultural experience in an outstanding work of literature for children and youth.” It is co-sponsored by ALSC and REFORMA, the National Association to Promote Library Information Services to Latinos and the Spanish-Speaking. It was to the Pura Belpré endowment, named for the first Latina librarian at the New York Public Library, that Caroline donated most of the $1000 she received from the Grolier Award.

At the recent ALA Midwinter Meeting in San Antonio, Caroline chaired the first ever Theodor Seuss Geisel Award Committee. This award will be given annually, beginning in 2006, “to the author(s) and illustrator(s) of the most distinguished contribution to the body of American children’s literature known as beginning reader books published in the United States during the preceding year. The award is to recognize the author(s) and illustrator(s) of a beginning reader book who demonstrate great creativity and imagination in his/her/their literary and artistic achievements to engage children in reading.”

While chairing the award committee, Caroline adopted a second grade class of twenty students to serve as “kid” judges. She was pleased at how well they took on this charge, mirroring the activities of the many adult judging panels on which she has served.

Her enthusiasm for trying new things is described by everyone with whom I talked about Caroline. Even taking the job at Ferguson was a gamble after so many years as a state and regional consultant. “What would it be like to work in a real library again?” she wondered. She took the chance, and she has just adored it; and it is clear from talking with her staff that they adore her. She encourages them to do all the things that she enjoys—writing grants, serving on awards committees, going to conferences. She has just successfully sponsored one of her staff to attend the 2006 ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans on the Penguin Putnam scholarship.

I can’t sum it up any better than repeating the words of the Grolier Award committee chair Julie Cummins, “Caroline’s many achievements are impressive by themselves, but it is her vibrant personality, her infectious enthusiasm and boundless passion for her profession that exemplify the spirit, intent and focus of the Grolier Award. Manager—leader—mentor—maven, Caroline Ward is a dynamic children’s librarian who is the embodiment of the criteria for the Grolier Award.”

Caroline Ward
Coordinator, Youth Services
Ferguson Library, Stamford

by Chris Bradley

Kathy Welling (foreground), president of Wilton Library Association Board of Trustees, and Kathy Leeds, director of Wilton Library, chat with Pete Hamill during the book signing portion of his February 2 appearance at the library.
NEW BRITAIN KIDS GET READY TO READ

Continued from page 1

mission becomes clear as she discusses the project. While she acknowledges that being at home with mom all day has its advantages, she is concerned that these kids aren’t getting the read-aloud experiences and exposure to books that help them be ready to learn.

The project utilizes mostly English language materials to build skills, but Jordan recognizes that some parents are more comfortable reading to their children in their native tongue (or may prefer to do so). Thus, the library purchased some materials in Polish and Spanish, the two other languages spoken widely in town. This effort may especially benefit those children who wind up in the occasional bilingual class in school as well as those kids headed for the dual-language program at the DiLoreto and Smalley magnet schools.

Jordan is a classic children’s librarian: a composed, caring woman who remembers to return the lotto tickets you forgot inside your library book. Ever alert to opportunities, she says, “Programming is the carrot that brings folks in,” adding, “good thing there’s no stick.” As she talks, 16 preschoolers seep into the main library’s children’s area, getting their hands and fingers (and sometimes mouths) on today’s wintertime craft project.

For 64 hours a week the library happily serves as gathering space for the 70,000+ residents of the melting pot of cultures squeezed into the city’s scant thirteen square miles. Ramadan, Chinese New Year, and African drumming programs mingle with Tails the Clown and Mardi Gras parties. Jordan enjoys this diversity and learning about other cultures and traditions; she’s been at it for 37 years and has forgotten more about children’s librarianship than many will ever know.

“We’re a good team here,” she says of her colleagues. Jordan’s affinity for Palasek is also clear. Palasek, 23, is at the other end of the career spectrum; while programming between 18-20 hours a week she pursues her Master’s degree in school counseling at CCSU. Jordan describes Palasek’s personality, skills, and schooling (which brings an especially useful knowledge of learning styles) as a “gift.”

As Palasek packs to go, the children sit down to lunch and, en masse, scream “Thank you!” A fuzzy green T-Rex’s head and shoulders stick out of Miss Laura’s marvelous backpack as she returns to her car and catches her breath; the fifth—and final—program of the day is done, and it’s only 11:30 a.m. Jordan, too, catches some air while eyeing the sky, probably wondering what she can do next.

Douglas Lord is LSTA program assistant at the Connecticut State Library. LSTA funds provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services, a federal agency that fosters innovation, leadership and a lifetime of learning, supported this project. All photographs by Douglas Lord.

LOOKING AT BOOKS

Continued from page 2

Mindich suggests solutions, many of which require some government intervention in the media. His suggestions include free airline for political advertisements and more strenuous FCC requirements to create more diverse broadcast and newspaper ownership. Mindich would applaud Connecticut’s requirement that all graduating high school students take and pass a civic course. He advocates more incentives for students to learn current events, such as a new civics section on the SAT. He urges individuals and institutions to be more willing to invest in serious journalism.

Although Mindich does not specifically mention libraries, he would probably expect libraries to stop emulating the media’s fixation on satisfying the entertainment needs of “customers.” Perhaps, public and school libraries should take their role as educators more seriously and not let funding for serious nonfiction books and newspapers fall as budgets for more trivial pursuits rise. Helping to create good citizens should be in the mission statement of every library.

Tom Newman is the assistant director of the Middletown Library Service Center.
OBSESSION
Continued from page 2

beginning to wane, attendance at programs and the door count is growing. We see where the market is headed.

After our last renovation was completed we created a small café, squeezing it into a corner of the lobby. Who knew that the lobby, a place that was meant to pass through, take off your coat and get yourself organized for your library visit, would become the most important place in the building for those looking for connections? Why? Because people knew it was okay to talk. Adding a cup of coffee to the mix only made it more inviting.

One day I noticed in the local paper that a group of people were inviting others to join them at the library café—not even an official meeting space! People began to turn it into a destination for meetings, playdates, and small conference. You could talk on your cell phone there while connected to the wireless network alone or with someone else. It was clear that we needed to create more of those spaces and fast!

In our planning process for new spaces, and I hope yours, the bookstacks will still be there, but the space for discourse will be critical and not one of those parts that gets lopped off at the last hour as one scrambles to meet a budget.

Technology has made it possible for people to be isolated—
to work from home, to communicate without seeing another person. The connections that libraries are encouraging by having third places are a vital service to a population that is getting lonelier and lonelier. It’s a natural progression from borrowing a library book and going home to read alone to being able to stay in the library and strike up a conversation, whether that happens in the new fiction area or in a formal book discussion group. We should want and encourage people to stay, to talk, and to make connections. That’s what makes community.

In Bowling Alone, Robert Putnam bemoans the suburbs and how we get less and less connection to community. Long driveways and automatic garage door openers, home entertainment centers, backyard pools, and two-acre zoning with no sidewalks do not make for a sense of community. The library spaces that are created by people like us can combat this sense of isolation and help to strengthen our communities.

Take a look at the space you have and consider how you can turn it into a solid third place that makes community for your public. Make it something they can’t live without!

HERITAGE
Continued from page 5

- Replacement and/or repair of windows, storm windows and roof
- State of the art staff-designed circulation desk, additional entrance facing the parking lot, and staff access to the book drop directly from the circulation workroom
- Restoration of 1903 reading room for use as a periodical/newspaper reading room, featuring a marble fireplace, club chairs and reading tables
- New Book/Large Type Book area complete with club chairs, lamps and a large window
- Relocation of Gallery to a more public side of the library, furnished with low shelving for art books, restored wooden benches, and a museum quality modular wall system
- Relocation of reference desk to a central area within view of entry and circulation desk
- Creation of a Teen Room with tables, comfortable seating, books, non-print materials, computers and listening stations
- Five study rooms available in adult and children's areas
- A computer training room that allows for public Internet access when not being used as a classroom
- A quiet reading room, home to the book club collection, complete with a large bay window and wing chairs
- Non-print collections combined in a spacious and bright area
- Relocation of staff offices to more efficient and attractive layouts
- Reconfiguration of meeting room into more efficient “suite” design, renovation of the historic Jennings Room into a conference space available to staff and public
- Transformation of the Children’s Library into a series of small “neighborhoods” designed to stimulate children’s minds and to foster language development, motor skills, problem solving, sharing and social skills, creativity and dramatic play and cognitive skills. The neighborhoods are based on familiar landmarks in the Town of Fairfield, including: Gazebo entrance; Information Lighthouse reference desk; Town Green reading area; Birth to Three Little Farm, complete with bins of board books and LearningScapes; Country Store, housing picture books and “Talk Tubes”; Puppet Mansion, including costumes available for play in the "attic"; Railroad Roundhouse and Train Station program room; Town Hall, featuring media and young children’s computer resources; and the Kiwanis Parent-Teacher Room.

Fairfield Public Library is now poised to greet the future with a beautiful, functional and welcoming state of the art facility. Its mission to promote reading and serve the people of Fairfield as a center for lifelong learning and a community hub now seems well assured.

Tom Geftino is the director of Fairfield Public Library, which will be the topic of a LIBRATECTS workshop on April 27, 10 am, General Project; 1:30 p.m, Children's Library. Register at http://24.123.220.34/cslib/evranced/eventcalendar.asp.

HIGHLIGHTS
Continued from page 4

Publicity Betty Anne Reiter announced the annual photo exhibit of Connecticut libraries—April 3-13 in the Legislative Office Building. The committee will not present awards this year for public relations materials.

Export/Local Services Ted Wilmot noted that there are 12 libraries in the state’s 18 correctional facilities; they are always looking for books, especially reference materials. Books can be donated through the Department of Corrections Central Office in Westerly.

SCSU Nancy Dombrow reported that Connecticut students prefer to take classes on-line and, as a result, SCSU is canceling classes held on campus.

Region 2 Marian Anodeo, director of Lucy Robbins Welles Library, is serving as interim town manager in Newington.
April Is Friends of the Library Month

by Mary Engels and Anita Wilson

Each year the Friends of Connecticut Libraries (FOCL), along with the rest of the library community, celebrate April as Friends of the Library Month. This year we are pleased to announce that Anne Farrow, Hartford Courant features reporter and author of Complicity, is serving as our Champion for Friends of the Library Month.

Libraries will receive a packet of information on celebrating this event, including a proclamation from Governor Rell and ideas for promoting Friends in their communities. FOCL suggests that libraries mount displays featuring their Friends activities and the statement that Anne Farrow has issued about the importance of libraries in her life (see sidebar).

Anne Farrow has been a writer and editor for New England newspapers since 1976, and on the staff of The Hartford Courant since 1988. Throughout her newspaper career she has specialized in projects devoted to literature and history. She helped found the Sunken Garden Poetry Festival, now one of the largest poetry festivals in America, and “Connecticut Voices,” a public radio program featuring the new work of distinguished state writers. Anne was a lead writer on “Complicity,” Northeast magazine’s extensive examination of Connecticut’s slave-dependent economy, and was the sole writer for “Beyond Complicity, the Forgotten Story of Connecticut’s Slaveships,” published in April 2005. She co-authored, with Joel Lang and Jennifer Frank, the book Complicity, How the North Promoted, Prolonged and Profited from Slavery, published in 2005.

Please contact Mary Engels, 800-437-2313 or mengels@cslib.org, or Anita Wilson, FOCL president, anita.wilson@snet.net, if you have questions about Friends of the Library Month.

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Library Champion Essay

by Ann Farrow

In May 2004, a library changed my life. A friend had sent me an 80-year-old newspaper article describing a 250-year-old ship's log in the collections of the Connecticut State Library. The log detailed three voyages made aboard three different slave ships; two of these ships embarked on journeys to Africa from New London.

I was stunned because for nearly two years I'd been working on newspaper projects—and a book—detailing New England’s relationship with slavery. I knew that Connecticut provisioned the sugar islands of the West Indies, where enslaved people were growing sugar in an agricultural system that killed them, but I didn't know that my home state was on the front lines of the slaving trade.

The first time I went to the State Library and read the ship's log on microfilm, I felt a stab of grief. The two ships that traveled from New London harbor to West Africa bought human beings there. In the log's middle voyage, which sailed from West Africa to an island in the Caribbean, a terrible disease broke out among the captives and they begin to die. The children die first.

The wonderful archivists and staff at the State Library permitted me to study the ship's log for several weeks. Every morning, I would check in with my editor at The Hartford Courant, where I am a writer, and then head across the street to the library, where I spent my days poring over the log itself, and trying to find its captains and mariners in the library's vast archive of birth, death, church and military records.

My editors decided I should travel to a remote island in Sierra Leone to see the slaving fortress where my Connecticut men had traded, and to write, on my return, a new chapter in Connecticut's history. I took copies of the log to the African people who live on the islands near the slaving fortress, and asked them to forgive my country.

The ship's log, which I believe was kept by a man named Samuel Gould, deepens our knowledge of Connecticut's long history. In working with it, and exploring the long-ago story that it tells, I have been given a great gift.

I was led to a story that has shown me what my life on earth is for: I began my journey at a library.