

The Lamplighter



IN THE SYSTEM

New Director Starts in January at T. B. Scott

Stacy Stevens starts the next phase of her library career at the T.B. Scott Free Library in Merrill on January 1, 2009. After 8 years as the Assistant Director and Head of Adult Services, she has been selected to be the new Director. This position was previously held by Bea Lebal, who retired at the end of 2008.

Stacy was born and grew up in Oshkosh, Wisconsin and later graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing. She worked as a nurse for thirteen years. After graduating, she wanted something else to do after always being so busy studying and working. She took on a second job as a shelver at the Oshkosh Public Library. This is where she learned about her true calling and decided that she wanted to go to library school and work in libraries.

After graduating from Texas Woman's University with a Master in Library Science in 1998, she started looking for a job in libraries while still working as a nurse. Finally settling in Merrill to be closer to family, she was named Assistant Director/Head of Adult Services at the T.B. Scott Free Library in 2000.

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Stacy, her husband Lee Opsahl, and their two children, enjoy living near the river in Merrill and often go kayaking. She enjoys reading mysteries and vampire novels (but not the Twilight series).

Stacy is looking forward to her new job and appreciates all of the help and support she is receiving from area libraries and the staff at T.B. Scott.

Congratulations, Stacy!

TECH TALK – MAKING TECHNOLOGY UNDERSTANDABLE!

Bandwidth, Bandwidth, Bandwidth....

Well, I've been in my job for just over a month now, and most of my time has been dominated by dealing with bandwidth issues. It seems to be one of the biggest challenges that we as a system face. Our libraries are becoming community centers where people gather to use our computers for things like job hunting, e-mail, taking tests, looking up information, watching TV shows they may have missed, downloading music, and playing online games. The first half of this list includes items that are relatively low in bandwidth usage. Sending text and small graphics over the "pipe" has a much smaller impact on our Internet connections, than do the bandwidth hogs of streaming video, music, and games. You see, the second half of this list, and the ever growing percentage of the usage that we see on our Internet connections, takes up a lot of the pipe we all have connecting us to the Internet and one another. Things like web pages and e-mail are sent in small pieces over the Internet and the bandwidth they use is released quickly, things like video and audio are "streamed" or playing continuously over our connections. Basically they hold onto the bandwidth they are using for the duration of the video or audio that is playing. This bandwidth is "tied up" and not available to anyone else until the streaming is complete.



Last week I saw this first hand in one of our libraries. I began repairing one of the circulation computers before the library opened. As soon as the library opened, five teenage boys came in and began playing online games with each other at the library's public access terminals. I saw the speed of my downloading the needed software slow to a crawl and I could see the bandwidth usage spike on the graphs we use to monitor the wide area network. At times the Internet connection even dropped as we maxed out the capacity of the library's Internet connection. So what is the answer? Do we stop our patrons from doing certain things? Do we keep purchasing more bandwidth? Can our budgets handle that?

For starters, we are increasing bandwidth in our libraries that are experiencing bandwidth issues. The TEACH program recently announced that they are increasing the subsidy on their 3Mbps lines, so that we will be able to increase the bandwidth for our libraries that are experiencing problems without impacting budgets. We are also in the process of implementing some traffic management rules on some of our wireless connections. If these work well for the libraries we are currently working with, then we can implement this system wide on both wireless and wired connections. Lastly, there are other solutions that we can look at with our service provider to manage traffic more effectively. I'll talk more on that in a future article.

Finally, there are some other not so obvious things to think about that impact how bandwidth is used and managed. WVLS uses WISNET as our service provider. WISNET connects up to a "cloud" via AT&T where many connections come together, not just our own, to merge traffic on the Internet. Neither we nor WISNET have any control over the traffic in this cloud. Just as we get congested, I'm sure this coming together point does as well. In short, Internet slowdowns and outages aren't always within our realm to correct in this interconnected environment. A second not so obvious issue is the speed of our computers. Our public access computers have to process streaming video, audio and games, and if they are old and slow, they will process the stream more slowly, thus tying up the bandwidth for longer periods of time. It might be helpful to designate newer, faster computers as gaming machines or for video and audio. This designation may be happening already by default, as the slower machines will show video in a choppy or distorted view. Patrons may select the newer computers themselves when they can.

Bandwidth management is a complicated issue. So many factors play into how our connections perform to their most efficient usage. It will be an ongoing service to manage, so I hope the WVLS libraries continue to provide constructive feedback, so that we can effectively manage this together.

(Patty Curthoys, WVLS Technology Consultant)

Browser Keyboard Shortcut Basics

I know many of you are switching to new versions of Internet browsers and oftentimes would like to learn a few browser keyboard shortcuts. Here are a few of my favorites:

- ❖ Ctrl+T – new tab
- ❖ Ctrl+click on a Link – open in new tab
- ❖ Ctrl+Shift+click on a Link - open in new foreground tab
- ❖ Shift+click on a Link - open in new window (use for videos you want to play on the side while you continue to surf)
- ❖ Ctrl+Scroll wheel – larger/smaller font size
- ❖ Ctrl+F – Find

- ❖ Ctrl+G – Find again
- ❖ Ctrl+Tab – Next tab
- ❖ Ctrl+Shift+T - In Firefox, (re)opens the last tab that you closed

<http://elearningtech.blogspot.com/2008/01/browser-keyboard-shortcut-basics.html>

(eLearning Technology, January 2, 2009)

YOUTH MATTERS

Eco-Reading: Selected Books for Children and Teens about Our Earth and the Environment

This bibliography highlights books for children and teens that enhance appreciation for nature and the earth, increase understanding of environmental challenges, and inspire action for change.

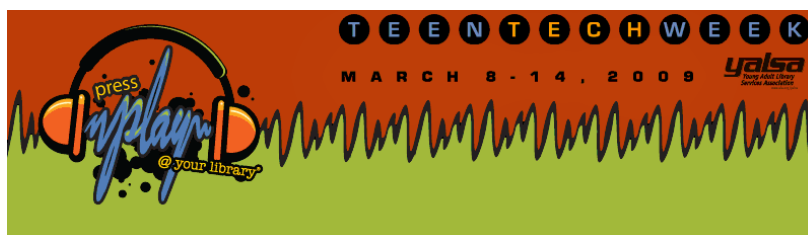
Most of the books have been chosen from various editions of *CCBC Choices*, the annual best-of-the-year list of the Cooperative Children's Book Center. The books have been divided into three categories:

- **In My World: Loving the Earth:** Books that foster deeper appreciation for the natural world, including several that imagine a brighter environmental landscape for the future.
- **What Happened Here? Environmental Challenges and Change:** Books that highlight past or current threats to the environment, including several science fiction and fantasy titles in which the future has paid a heavy price for transgressions of the past.
- **Taking Action: Planet Pioneers:** Books that showcase activists and others who have worked for specific or sweeping environmental change.

Each of the three categories is divided into fiction (fictional stories--both picture books and novels) and non-fiction (books of information and poetry). For the list and additional information, go to:

<http://www.education.wisc.edu/ccbc/books/detailListBooks.asp?idBookLists=324>

(Compiled by Tessa Michaelson and Megan Schliesman, Copyright © 2008 Cooperative Children's Book Center)



Start Planning Now for Teen Tech Week, March 8 – 14, 2009

Apply now for a Teen Tech Week Mini Grant! The theme for the 2009 Teen Tech Week is **Press Play @ Your Library**. YALSA, the Young Adult Library Services Association, will award up to

twenty grants consisting of \$450 in cash and \$50 in Teen Tech Week products to libraries planning innovative programs, services or resources to celebrate Teen Tech Week. Read more about this and apply by **January 19, 2009** at this website:

<http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/teentechweek/ttw09/home.cfm> Winners will be notified the week of February 9, 2009. Funding provided by Verizon Communications, Inc. Registration is now open! Last year, more than 1,500 libraries across the U.S. registered for Teen Tech Week.

Teen Tech Week 2009, which will be celebrated March 8-14, is about connecting teens with different technologies, especially those available through the library. Teens can literally press play on digital devices such as mp3 players, DVD players, gaming controllers and more. Press Play @ Your Library can be interpreted broadly to make it work for you in your own library. One way to interpret the theme is to emphasize the word "play." Play can be about teens creating and sharing their own content for the fun of it, like videos, music, and digital artwork. Play through games can be encouraged with tournaments, tech trivia contests, and video games. The theme can also take a more educational direction. Teens can "press play" on various digital devices to learn more about the world around them. They can "press play" to watch film documentaries, listen to an audiobook, get online homework help, learn a new language and more. YALSA encourages librarians and educators to be creative and take the theme in a direction that works for them and their teens!

Why Celebrate?

Teens, in order to gain the skills necessary to compete in today's job market, need access to digital and online information and trained professionals who can help them use these resources effectively, efficiently and ethically. Librarians and educators know this and work with teens on a regular basis to ensure they develop these skills. Teen Tech Week is a chance for libraries to throw open their physical and virtual doors, and show their communities all the great things they're doing for teens with technology.

Nearly 1 in 4 youth aged 8 to 18 do not have Internet access at home. A June 2007 study (found at - <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/HarrisYouthPoll.pdf>) conducted by Harris Interactive for ALA, found that one-quarter of teens who regularly visit the public library and nearly one-third who regularly visit the school library said their primary reason is to use the library's computers for fun. Multiple studies have shown that the majority of teens lack the critical thinking skills and technical expertise to use the Internet and other electronic resources effectively.

Teens need to know that the library is a trusted resource for accessing information and that librarians are the experts who can help them develop the skills they need to use electronic resources effectively and efficiently.

(Young Adult Library Services Association, December 23, 2008)

Be Creative & Express Yourself

@ the WVLS SLP
Workshop

Wednesday, March 11, 2009
1:30- 4:00 P.M.
Quality Inn
668 W. Kemp-Hwy 8 West
Rhineland, WI



Collect all the inspiration a librarian could need for planning an amazing & artsy 2009 Summer Library Program. Join **Sonja Ackerman**, Wausau School District Library Media Specialist, and **Dee Bohn & Jan Nelson** of the MCPL-Rothschild Branch as they share tips for games, programs, decorations, promotion and crafts.

This workshop will follow the 22nd Anniversary session of Children's Book Fest, sponsored by the School District of Rhineland and the Rhineland District Library.

- ✦ 8:30 a.m. CCBC Book Exhibit Begins
- ✦ 1:30 - 4:00 p.m. WVLS SLP Workshop

Please R.S.V.P. to Beth Sillars at sillars@wvls.lib.wi.us or 715-261-7255 to register for the WVLS SLP Workshop by Friday, March 6, 2009.

If you have questions or need special accommodations, contact Beth.

HITHER & YON

How to Be Happy at Work in 2009?

Now that 2008 is over, it makes a lot of sense to reflect on the year that passed. Unfortunately, most people do this by looking back and making a tally of everything that went wrong. The things they should have done. The goals they should have reached. The progress that didn't come. I think you will learn much more if you turn this approach upside-down, so here's my suggestion for a new year's exercise in happiness at work.

Simply think back on your working life in 2008 and answer the following 10 questions. It's important that you write down your answers - it helps you to reflect more deeply about the questions.

1. What went really well for you at work in 2008?
2. What did you do that you're proud of?
3. Who have you helped out?
4. How have you grown and developed professionally?
5. How have you grown and developed personally at work?
6. Who has really appreciated your work?
7. Who has helped you out and been there for you?
8. Who have you admired at work in 2008?
9. What have been some fun moments at work in 2008?
10. Which 5 things from 2008 would you like to have more of in 2009?

Have fun- and have a happy 2009 at work!

(Alexander on Happy at Work – from The Chief Happiness Officer Blog, December 9, 2008)

INFO TO GO

Get Your Fuel Economy Information for 2009

The U.S. Department of Energy and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency seek your help in providing customers with information about fuel economy and the benefits of using more fuel-efficient vehicles. These 2 agencies have published a Guide entitled: "The Fuel Economy Guide 2009. They would appreciate your library displaying these Guides in a prominent place in your library with other automotive reference materials. To get your free copies, go to this website and order your copies now: <http://www.fueleconomy.gov/feg/contacts.shtml>. For the electronic version of the Guide and updated fuel economy data for new and used passenger vehicles dating back to 1985, go to their website at <http://www.fueleconomy.gov>.

(U.S. Department of Energy, December 2008)

The 100 Most Popular Photoshop Tutorials of 2008

Sometimes you may find it difficult to look for some of the highest quality photoshop tutorials. Almost all tutorials would label themselves to be good, high quality or even the best photoshop tutorial you can find.

In order to save you time, the Photoshop Lady has been spending almost a whole year to come up with *The 100 Most Popular Photoshop Tutorials of 2008*. These have been selected from the many published tutorials, with over 1 million votes and views from our Photoshop users and readers. Here is the link to them: <http://www.photoshoplady.com/the-100-most-popular-photoshop-tutorials-2008/>
(*Photoshop Lady Blog, December 23, 2008*)

Did You Know That 2009 Was the International Year of Astronomy?

The International Year of Astronomy 2009 (IYA2009) is a global effort initiated by the International Astronomical Union and UNESCO to help the citizens of the world rediscover their place in the Universe through the day- and night-time sky, and thereby engage a personal sense of wonder and discovery.

Everyone should realize the impact of astronomy and other fundamental sciences on our daily lives, and understand how scientific knowledge can contribute to a more equitable and peaceful society. IYA2009 activities will take place locally, nationally, regionally and internationally. National Nodes have been formed in each country to prepare activities for 2009. These nodes will establish collaborations between professional and amateur astronomers, science centers and science communicators to prepare activities for 2009. Already now, 135 countries are involved and well over 140 are expected to participate eventually.

To help coordinate this huge global program and to provide an important resource for the participating countries, the IAU has established a central Secretariat and an IYA2009 website as the principal IYA2009 resource for public, professionals and media alike. For more information, check out this website at: <http://www.astronomy2009.org/>

(*Librarian's Internet Index: New This Week, December 18, 2008*)



WEBSITES OF INTEREST

Most Popular Free Windows Downloads - <http://lifehacker.com/5110552/most-popular-free-windows-downloads-of-2008/>

Adam Pash writes: "In the past year we've highlighted hundreds of Windows apps aimed at making your life easier, boosting your computer productivity, and powering up your PC. For those of you who weren't able to keep up, here's a look back at the most popular Windows downloads of 2008.

Many were brand new this year, while others were solid updates to popular software.”

(American Libraries Direct, December 17, 2008 taken from Lifehacker, December 15, 2008)

Top 10 Real World Web Apps of 2008 –

http://www.readwriteweb.com/archives/top_10_real_world_web_apps_of_2008.php

Here is a list from Read Write Web listing the top 10 real world web applications used during 2008. To name a few: Twitter, Firefox, Hulu, Ning and many more.

(American Libraries Direct, December 10, 2008)

Read Across America Day - http://www.literacyhelp.org/reading_resource_project/

The Read Across America Project is an ongoing program that runs throughout the year and distributes books for FREE of charge to literacy programs. Recipients pay shipping, handling, and administrative costs, which is only \$0.68 per book or \$68.00 for 100 books.

(New on Nic Bits, December 22, 2008)

Best Graphic Novels of 2008 -

<http://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/blog/540000654/post/710038071.html?nid=2413&rid=1539780146>

Granted “best of” lists are always subjective, and considering the number of new books released every year, I never expect to see many graphic novels on the various lists that show up this time of year. So here is a list of just the best graphic novels for 2008.

(School Library Journal - Extra Helping, December 17, 2008)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JANUARY

January is: National Hobby Month, find out more at:

<http://www.cyfernet.org/hottopic/hobbymonth.html>

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|--------|--|
| Jan 1 | New Year's Day – WVLS Office Closed. |
| Jan 14 | Bea Lebal's Retirement Party at T.B. Scott Free Library, Merrill, 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. |
| Jan 17 | WVLS Board of Trustees Meeting - at the Marathon County Public Library, 9:30 a.m. |

FEBRUARY

February is: Library Lovers' Month @ your library, find out more at:

<http://www.librarysupport.net/librarylovers/>

- Feb 3 Library Legislative Day – Best Western Inn on the Park – Madison. Details are at: <http://www.wla.lib.wi.us/legis/day/index.htm>
- Feb 5 **WVLS V-Cat Council Meeting** – T. B. Scott Free Library, Merrill, 9:30 a.m.
- Feb 13 College of DuPage Online Workshop - “Targeting the Ages: Programming that Hits the Mark” – 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Register with Inese Christman for Login Information or to reserve the DVD at ichristman@wvls.lib.wi.us
- Feb 14 **WVLS Executive Committee Meeting** – Marathon County Public Library, 9:30 a.m.

MARCH

March is: National Women’s History Month, find out more at: <http://www.nwhp.org/>

- Mar 8 Daylight Saving Time begins at 2 a.m. For more information go to: <http://www.energy.ca.gov/daylightsaving.html>
- Mar 11 **WVLS Summer Library Program Workshop** and the Children’s Bookfest – Rhinelander.
- Mar 14 **WVLS Board of Trustees Meeting** – at the Marathon County Public Library, 9:30 a.m.
- Mar 20 First day of Spring!

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

“With the new day comes new strength and new thoughts.”

Eleanor Roosevelt



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(Note: Web links in past issues are not checked for currency and may no longer work.)

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