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PUBLIC LIBRARIES ONLINE WEEKLY

Wednesday, June 24, 2015

Issue #7

Trending...

New on PLOnline This Week



Are you going to the ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco? If so, check out Ginny Mie's tips on where to go and what to do in [Explore San Francisco's Libraries, Bookstores and Literary Landmarks While at ALA 2015](#). The Newbery Honor graphic novel memoir, *El Deafo*, is about author Cece Bell's struggle with going deaf at a young age. Read our interview with her in [I Was Lucky Because I Could Walk to Our](#)

[Local Library: A Conversation with Cece Bell](#). Learn more about the effort to increase diversity in children's books in ["We Need Diverse Books" Campaign Gaining Momentum](#).

Midweek Media Mash-Up

A Choice Selection of Links for Your Perusal

- [Librarian Cynthia Hurd dedicated her life to books, educating others.](#)

- [Watch a trailer](#) for the Malala Yousafzai documentary (to be released in October).
- [How creativity, animation, and stories define us.](#)
- [Torrance \(CA\) Library Board Member Removed from Board.](#)
- [How self-confident are you?](#)
- [The week's new headlines complete with book suggestions for further reading.](#)
- [Why aren't there more ebooks on \(virtual\) library shelves?](#)

From the May/June 2015 Issue

Comparing Notes -- A Conversation about Library Service to County Jails

By **Dustin Fife** and **Kim Fong**

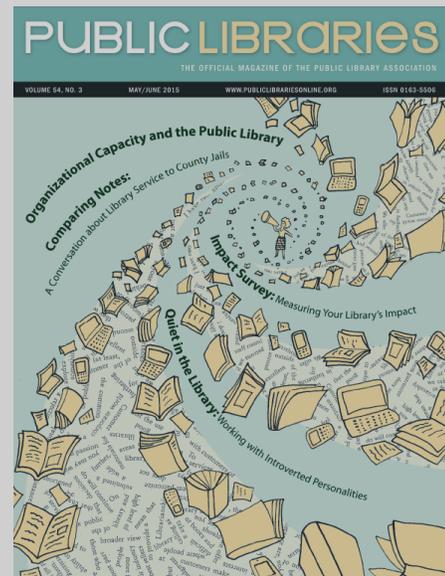
In this informal discussion, the authors share their experiences and ideas about working with and in local jail systems.

Dustin Fife (DF): Kim Fong, you've changed my life! Some time ago we talked about your experiences as the librarian for Salt Lake County (Utah) Jail and I was inspired. It took some time to digest, but two months ago my library, the San Juan County (Utah) Library (SJCL) began providing library services for our small county jail, which houses about 100 inmates. It is one of the most fulfilling and gratifying things I have ever done. Everyone needs a self-esteem boost from time to time, and I'll tell you this, every time I work at the jail it is a huge boost. I have never been showered with so much gratitude in my life.

Before we began our library services, the jail had only a few thousand old and threadbare titles. There were no Spanish-language materials, though several inmates speak almost no English, and no new titles were being purchased. With that in mind, our new patrons are ecstatic to have access to the public library's collection and services.

I thought it would be hard to get this program approved, but both the county sheriff and jail commander were immensely helpful. They both love programming and hope that the new library will help lower recidivism and increase quality of life. The program has rolled out smoothly and has felt like an important success for SJCL. My question to you is where do I go from here? What else should I try at the jail? What worked and didn't work for you? Is it strange to feel so inspired by inmates?

Kim Fong (KF): I know that library service at the jail is very fulfilling, because the patrons are so grateful and appreciative of the service. I've never been in a library job where I got standing ovations for bringing books into the unit—until I started working in the jail. It is very rewarding, but it is also very easy to pat yourself on the back and think that everything is great because you have such an appreciative audience. It's easy to look great when you



Ask Us Anything

We want this newsletter to be a dialogue. If you have questions about PLOnline, *Public Libraries*, PLA or anything else, send them in! Just hit reply and ask us anything. We'll try to answer every email and maybe even share our conversation in future newsletters.

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