

THE STATE OF AMERICA'S LIBRARIES



A Report from the American Library Association

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ALA American Library Association

*Library use increases dramatically
as economy sags; funding declines.*

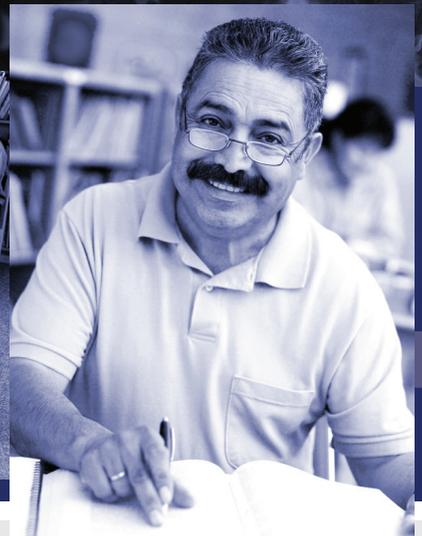
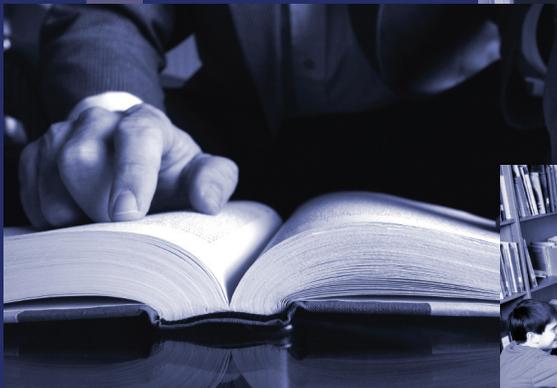


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INTRODUCTION

Library use increases dramatically as economy sags; funding declines

The importance of libraries in American life continued to grow in 2008—and accelerated dramatically as the national economy sank and people looked for sources of free, effective help in a time of crisis.

A Harris Poll released in September revealed that 68 percent of Americans have a library card, an increase of 5 percent since 2006. In-person visits increased 10 percent in the same period, and 76 percent of Americans had visited their local public library in the year preceding the survey, compared with 66 percent two years ago. Online-visit data were even more remarkable: 41 percent of library card holders visited their library websites in the year before the poll, compared with 24 percent in 2006.

Libraries, an excellent community resource in ordinary times, in extraordinary times become something of a goldmine.

“When economic times get tough ... many families across the country are turning to a familiar place, the public library,” for support, wrote Jim Rettig, president of the American Library Association (ALA), in a contribution to the Huffington Post. “As the nation continues to experience a sharp and jarring economic downturn, local libraries are providing valuable free tools and resources to help Americans of all ages through this time of uncertainty ... [N]ow more than ever, libraries are proving that they are valued and trusted community partners.”

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libraries are proving that
they are valued and trusted
community partners.”***

—Jim Rettig, President
American Library Association

Rettig cited a study that showed that job-related activities are a priority use of library computers and Internet services; that three-fourths of libraries offer information technology training to their patrons, including how to conduct online job searches and how to use standard software applications; and that one of the most critical roles public libraries play in hard economic times is helping patrons access employment assistance.

The surge in library use made the news, as local and national media recognized the trend. *Boston Globe* columnist Derrick Z. Jackson wrote on Jan. 3 that public libraries nationwide were posting double-digit percentage increases in circulation and new library-card applications. Jim Carlton wrote in the *Wall Street Journal* on Jan. 15, 2009, that libraries nationwide had reported jumps in attendance of as much as 65 percent over the past year as newly unemployed people flocked to branches to fill out résumés and scan ads for job listings. The CBS Evening News reported on Feb. 2, 2009, that 18 million people had visited Los Angeles public libraries in 2008—two million more than in 2007. Many were recently unemployed and coming for help: every computer terminal was being used, and librarians had become job counselors.

The coverage reached a crescendo of sorts on Feb. 28, when the Washington Post reported that D.C. resident Judith Theodore “scrambles daily between public libraries in the District so that the oldest of her three children has access to a computer to do his homework, and she can search for a job”; National Public Radio aired a piece on “What’s New At The Library? Financial Advice”; and CNN broadcast a report that noted that “libraries across the country have seen dramatic increases in the use of their services, which in addition to free Internet access can include resume workshops and foreclosure seminars.”

Officials backtrack on forecasts of modest budget gains

However, public funding did not keep pace with use, and the forecasts of modest budget gains or only moderate cuts for 2009 that prevailed early in 2008 became more pessimistic as the year drew to a close and the depth of the national economic morass became more clear. A survey of state library agencies at year's end revealed significant losses of state funding for public libraries in the year ahead—and anticipation of more cuts to come (see below).

'We Can no Longer Afford to be Passive Victims'

"It's time to beat our plowshares into swords," says Keith Michael Fiels, executive director of the ALA, in a column in the March 2009 *American Libraries*.

In hard economic times, "all too often, the library is the first to be cut, or is disproportionately cut, regarded as a 'nonessential' service." It is a familiar phenomenon that library use increases in difficult times, Fiels writes, but he adds, "Some things are different this time. This time, the increase is being widely reported in newspapers and magazines and on radio and television. This time we also know a lot more about how to fight impending budget cuts.

"We know that:

- "We can no longer afford to be passive victims; we have to be outspoken advocates and encourage the public to advocate on behalf of libraries as well.
- "If we do make the case for our libraries, we are much more likely to receive needed funding or avoid budget cuts.
- "There are skills and resources that can help anyone become a more persuasive and effective library advocate.

"We also have a secret weapon: The energy and enthusiasm of ... the millions of people who use and love libraries."

Fiels lists a number of ways in which ALA members and others can get involved, concluding:

"Times may be tough—and getting tougher—but we do have a whole new set of tools to help us do the job. So, let's all roll our sleeves up, we've got some libraries to save."

The ALA Washington Office prepared a report on the library community's key issues and concerns, *Opening the "Window to a Larger World": Libraries' Role in Changing America* and submitted it to the Obama-Biden transition team on Dec. 17. As the new year began, Obama adviser David Axelrod said support for libraries was still part of the stimulus package; for example, as part of the \$787 billion recovery plan that became law in February, public and community college libraries can apply for grants in a \$200 million program for expanding public computer capacity.

The effects of the slumping economy on local libraries were often painful. In Troy, New York, for example, two of three branches of the public library closed in February; library staffing was reduced by 4½ full-time equivalents, the book and materials budget was cut by 30 percent, and children's and adult programming was cut by 60 percent.

School library media programs were holding their own as 2008 progressed, though they too were bound to be affected by the recession and resultant belt-tightening. According to a national survey, about half of school library media programs continued to be staffed full time by a school library media specialist. Less encouraging was the fact that the specialist found little time for professional activities outside the center itself.

The data from that survey suggest that, while a full-time school library media specialist is present about half the time, they typically have only 2½ hours a week of the staff support that would enable them to engage in curriculum or professional development activities or to work with teachers and students in their classrooms. The declining economy also had begun to affect academic libraries by year’s end, and the recession “could send shock waves well into the future,” according to Erika Linke, president of the Association of College and Research Libraries.

The effects seemed bound to be most sharply felt at small colleges. Larger institutions often have better protection from economic ups and downs than smaller colleges, which are much closer to their communities and to their funding sources, Linke said. In fact, many community colleges have begun reducing library hours or staff just when enrollment was swollen by students choosing to save money through living at home and paying lower tuitions—and by unemployed people seeking to acquire new skills, she said.

State budget woes trickle down to local public libraries

Many public libraries saw local budget shortfalls aggravated by reductions in support from states that faced their own declining tax revenues and federal support. In the ALA’s December 2008 survey of the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies, 41 percent of states reported declining state funding for public libraries in fiscal 2009.

“At the same time demand for public library services are skyrocketing, the funding needed to maintain these services is in jeopardy in many states,” said the ALA’s Jim Rettig. “Unfortunately, declines in state funding often are compounded by reductions at the local level, creating a snowball effect that threatens library staffing, hours open to the public, collection development, and technology maintenance.

“Libraries are part of the solution when a community is struggling economically—assisting the unemployed with jobs searches and filing unemployment benefits, helping the unskilled learn to use a computer, providing homework help and access to e-government services,” Rettig added.

In the midst of it all, \$1.4 million worth of good news

The ALA Public Programs Office announced in December that it had garnered support from more than 450 individual and corporate supporters and successfully completed a campaign to raise matching funds for the Cultural Communities Fund.

The five-year endowment campaign was in response to a challenge grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities; the Public Programs Office received more than \$332,000 in 2008, bringing the campaign total to \$1.4 million. Funding from the Cultural Communities Fund will support the creation of annual professional development opportunities for librarians, turnkey national model programs, and resources designed to enhance local programming capacity.

The recession “could send shock waves well into the future.”

—Erika Linke, President
ACRL

PUBLIC LIBRARIES

More Americans than ever are card-carrying library users

U.S. libraries continued to experience a dramatic increase in library card registration in 2008. According to a Harris Poll from Harris Interactive, released Sept. 22, 2008, during Library Card Sign-up Month, 68 percent of American adults have a library card, an increase of 5 percent since 2006.

Survey results indicate that this is the largest number of Americans with library cards since 1990, when the ALA started to measure library card use.

In-person visits increased 10 percent compared with a 2006 ALA household survey. Seventy-six percent of Americans visited their local public library in the year preceding the survey, compared with 65.7 percent two years ago. Online visits to libraries increased even more substantially: 41 percent of library card holders visited their library websites in the year before the poll, compared with 23.6 percent in 2006. This finding complements the ALA's 2008 Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study, which found that public libraries have significantly increased the Internet services available to their communities, including online homework help, downloadable audio and video, and e-books.

Libraries provide programs and services for people of all ages, but the poll finds that certain groups are more likely than others to have a library card—women more than men (73 percent versus 62 percent), and Midwesterners (72 percent) and Westerners (71 percent) more than Easterners (65 percent) and Southerners (63 percent).

The poll also found that 39 percent of card-holders visit the library to borrow books; 12 percent to take out CDs, videos, or computer software; 10 percent to use a computer to view library holdings; 9 percent to use reference materials; and 8 percent to gain Internet access.

Almost all the survey respondents (92 percent) said they view their local library as an important education resource. Seven of 10 agreed that their local library is a pillar of the community (72 percent), a community center (71 percent), a family destination (70 percent), and a cultural center (69 percent). Based on everything they either know or might have heard or read, three of five respondents (59 percent) were extremely or very satisfied with their public library. The satisfaction rate was even higher among those who have a library card.

The Harris Poll is a non-commissioned survey that was conducted online within the United States Aug. 11-17, 2008, among 2,710 adults (ages 18 and over). Full text is available on the HarrisInteractive website.

Who has a library card?

Category	%
All adults	68
Sex	
Male	62
Female	73
Age	
Echo Boomers (18 – 31)	70
Generation X (32 – 43)	68
Baby Boomers (44 – 62)	67
Matures (63+)	65
Race/Ethnicity	
White	66
African American	67
Hispanic	72
Region	
East	65
Midwest	72
South	63
West	71
Household Income	
Less than \$35,000	68
\$35,000 to \$49,999	66
\$50,000 to \$74,999	69
\$75,000 or more	69
Education	
High school or less	61
Some college	72
College graduate	75
Post graduate	75
Political Party	
Republican	67
Democrat	71
Independent	63

Source: Harris Poll, Sept. 22, 2008

“The public library is an essential community resource”

The trends reflected in the Harris Poll are even more positive in the context of remarkable data concerning library use gathered a year earlier by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

The Public Libraries Survey report for fiscal 2006 includes information on population of service areas, service outlets, library collections and services, library staff, and operating revenue and expenditures. More than 9,000 libraries in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Virgin Islands took part in the survey.

Among the report’s key findings:

- 2.1 billion transactions were made between public libraries and their users in FY 2006; this total includes books, other printed materials and audio/visual resources. This translates to an average of 7.3 transactions for every individual living in a library service area. (97 percent of Americans live in a library service area.)
- 1.4 billion visits to public libraries were made in FY 2006, or almost five visits for every individual who resides in a library service area.
- Children are among the heaviest users of public-library resources. Children’s materials accounted for 35 percent of all circulation transactions in FY 2006, and attendance at library-based children’s programs was 57.8 million.
- Public libraries had 807.2 million print materials, 42.6 million audio materials, and 43.9 million video materials in their collections in FY 2006.
- Public libraries play an important role in providing Internet access to communities. Nationwide, there were 334 million uses of public-use Internet terminals in FY 2006.

In Los Angeles, about 18 million people visited the city’s 72 libraries in the fiscal year ended in June 2008, up 12 percent from the previous year. Result: a 10 percent spike in checkouts, to a total of 17.2 million books, DVDs, CDs, and other material.

—Los Angeles Daily News

“The report shows the tremendous value that our public libraries have in the United States,” said Anne-Imelda M. Radice, IMLS director. “The public library is an essential community resource particularly in difficult economic times. This survey provides solid data that helps to inform policy and practice decisions at the community, state, and national levels.”

This was the first Public Libraries Survey report released since the IMLS assumed responsibility for the survey from the National Center for Education Statistics. The survey’s extraordinary response rate—97.5 percent—resulted from the cooperative effort among the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies, the IMLS, and the Census Bureau, which collected the data under contract with the IMLS. A PDF version of the report and data files and documentation are available on line.

Smaller libraries top larger ones in per capita usage

Smaller libraries—those with service populations of fewer than 10,000—more than held their own in terms of usage, according to a report last year from the Public Library Data Service (PLDS), a project of the Public Library Association.

The State of America's Libraries - 2009

In 2007, PLDS libraries served 89,469,248 registered patrons, 50.2 percent of a total legal service area population of 178,256,883 in the United States and Canada, according to the *Public Library Data Service Statistical Report 2008*. PLDS libraries also circulated items 1,388,250,736 times (n=868 libraries; 1.6 million circulations per library reporting), performed 195,939,114 reference transactions (n=814 libraries; 240,711 transactions per library reporting), and provided programs to 45,043,847 patrons (n=846 libraries; 53,243 program participants per library reporting).

The number of library visits per capita was largest (about 8.14) for the group of libraries with service populations of less than 10,000 and lowest (3.95) for the libraries with service populations of 1,000,000 and more. Circulation per capita followed a similar pattern; so did registrations per capita, though the differences here were less marked. Holdings per capita were almost five times as high for libraries with populations of less than 5,000 as for those with populations of more than a million (9.84 vs. 2.04), and in-library use of materials per capita in the smallest category of libraries ranged from 2.22 to 4.86 times as much as in other categories.

The PLDS received responses from 872 of the 1,641 libraries that were invited to participate in the survey, a response rate of 53.1 percent. The libraries ranged in size from serving 884 to serving more than four million people in their legal service areas; most (403, or 46.2 percent) were in the 50,000-249,000 range.

PLDS 2008 Library Output Characteristics per \$1,000 of Expenditures

	# of Libraries	Min.	Max.	Ave.	Standard Deviation
Library visits	821	1.97	639.01	153.67	71.86
Circulation	869	18.48	948.27	236.72	118.16
Program attendance	865	0.36	1909.92	11.62	65.8
Reference transactions	815	0.00	825.63	29.43	42.2
In-library use of materials	326	0.29	874.75	56.21	85.28
Library registrations	778	1.03	363.66	18.46	16.95

Income and expenditure measures followed a different pattern. Libraries that serve 25,000-49,999 people and those that serve fewer than 5,000 had the highest income per capita (\$80.79 and \$74.42, respectively) and the highest expenditures per capita (\$50.50 and \$53.28, respectively). Variations were less dramatic in the per-capita expenditures category (the low was \$31.76 for libraries serving a million or more people) than in the per-capita income category, where the low was \$33.66 for libraries serving a million or more people.

Expenditures are expected to yield results, and the Public Library Data Service 2008 report looked at various library “outputs” in this light. Compared with 2007 data, reference transactions decreased, library registrations increased, and other values remained statistically the same.

The *Public Library Data Service Statistical Report 2008* is available at the ALA Store.

A book is a book is a ...

Even the definition of “book” continued to expand. A September 2008 survey conducted by the Audio Publishers Association revealed that 28 percent of adult respondents had listened to an audiobook in the past year and that audiobook sales had increased 12 percent from 2006. Almost all (92 percent) of audiobook users reported that they had read a printed book in the past year, and a third of them said they had read 16 or more books, according to the survey. The majority (88 percent) of audiobook listeners are college-educated.

And where do audiobook fans go to decide what to listen to? The library comes in first in this category (43 percent), followed by retail bookstores (27 percent).

Increased library use does not mean increased funding

The economic recession that began in early 2008 may have been a factor in the public's increased use of libraries, and the flip side of that coin was not so shiny.

In June 2008, the ALA Office for Library Advocacy (OLA) reported that, despite some positive trends, much of the information it had gathered on library funding continued to reflect cuts affecting operating hours, staffing, collection and materials acquisition, programming, services, and facility expansion/enhancement.

The OLA noted that the data in its report were aggregated from published sources and therefore presented only a partial view of the overall funding crisis currently faced by libraries.

Among other instances, the OLA report cited:

- Bridgeport, Connecticut, where the City Council's budget committee in May unanimously reinstated \$900,000 in funding to the Bridgeport Public Library. The budget submitted by Mayor Bill Finch had called for \$1.1 million in cuts and the elimination of 25 staff positions.
- Modesto, California, where the Stanislaus County Library issued layoff notices to 94 of its 138 part-time staff on May 1, the result of a projected \$1 million shortfall due to a slowing economy and a \$291,000 drop in state funding tied to local contributions.
- Loudon, New Hampshire, where the public library cut hours and staff in March following a town meeting vote that slashed its budget by \$58,000, or 30 percent.
- Elsewhere: The Fitchburg (Mass.) library budget was cut 68%, to \$360,000, which produced service cuts leading to state decertification. ... The Anne Arundel County (Md.) Public Library lost \$1.15 million of its \$20 million budget. ... Baldwin Public Library, in suburban Detroit, took a \$900,000 hit on its budget of \$4.7 million. ... The Washoe County Library System, Reno, Nevada, had \$1.96 million cut from a budget of \$13 million.

Still, the Jersey City Free (N.J.) Public Library received \$222,000 from fundraisers and sponsors to acquire a custom-built bookmobile accessible to people with disabilities and put into service in May 2008.

The 2008 PLDS survey included a special section on financial practices of public libraries, detailing various sources and types of library finances. The most common forms of alternative library financing were overdue fines, individual or group monetary contributions, revenues from printing services, contributions from friends organizations, and interest on investment income; but the largest monetary contributions came from local library foundations. The largest government source of income was state library aid and grants.

As 2008 drew to a close, the effects of the sinking national economy on library budgets became more apparent. A number of cities and states responded to drastic decreases in tax collections by proposing midyear budget corrections that would have ripple effects on libraries. Still, libraries responding to a budget survey by *Library Journal* in late October projected a 2 percent increase in budgets for 2009, about half of what had been projected for 2008—but still on the daylight side of zero.

The libraries responding to the survey projected an increase of less than 1 percent in funds for materials, and respondents in some size categories were anticipating a decline in materials budgets. Overall, staffing expenditures, energy costs, and the increasing demand for services were the chief areas for financial concern.

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*Public-Library Budget Outlook for 2009**

Population Served	Total Budget for 2009	Change from '08	Materials Budget 2009	Change from '08	Salary Budget 2009	Change from '08
Total sample	\$7,204,000	+2.0%	\$923,000	+0.9%	\$4,394,000	+2.8%
Less than 10,000	256,000	+2.5%	27,700	-1.3%	159,000	+2.1%
10,000–24,999	788,000	+2.9%	94,000	+3.6%	422,000	+3.4%
25,000–49,999	1,688,000	+1.4%	204,000	+1.6%	1,031,000	+3.3%
50,000–99,999	3,195,000	+2.3%	401,000	+3.7%	1,898,000	+2.6%
100,000–249,000	6,501,000	+3.5%	855,000	-0.1%	4,044,000	+3.7%
250,000–499,000	14,045,000	+1.8%	1,931,000	+2.3%	8,614,000	+3.6%
500,000–999,999	34,378,000	+0.7%	4,416,000	+0.6%	20,964,000	+1.6%
1,000,000 or more	58,134,000	+2.1%	6,869,000	-0.8%	33,806,000	+2.7%

Source: *Library Journal* Budget Survey 2009.

* The survey, conducted in October 2008, elicited responses from 623 public libraries of all sizes, with roughly equal distribution among geographic regions in the United States and among urban, suburban, and rural/exurban areas. The response rate was 31 percent.

State budgets — and library funding — are hardest hit

At the state-funding level, the outlook was downright gloomy.

Forty percent of the states reported declining state funding for public libraries in fiscal 2009, and 20 percent of these states figure more cuts were on the way, according to a survey of the chief officers of state and territorial library agencies conducted in December 2008.

The Southeast has been the hardest hit in this regard, with cuts of 30 percent in South Carolina and 23 percent in Florida in fiscal 2009 compared with fiscal '08. Per capita state aid to libraries in South Carolina has fallen back to 2003 levels while inflation has averaged between 2.5 and 3.4 percent annually.

Alabama saw a 9 percent reduction for fiscal 2009, and Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi saw cuts of 8, 7, and 5 percent, respectively.

Hawaii, where state funding provides 86.7 percent of overall library funding, reported a 7 percent decline in state funding for fiscal 2009 and anticipates more reductions. Ohio, where the state provides 62.1 percent of overall funding, also braced for cuts as state revenues plummeted. Nationally, state funding makes up about 9 percent of overall public library funding. Budget questions were one part of a survey of members of the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA) conducted by the ALA; the response rate to these questions was 96 percent.

The local outlook was often no better. Philadelphia and San Diego announced they would need to shut some libraries because of budget shortfalls, Meg Massey reported Dec. 21, 2008, in *Parade* magazine. She quoted Philadelphia Mayor Michael A. Nutter: "I know how important libraries are, but unfortunately we have to close a \$108 million deficit this fiscal year, and serious changes need to be made to our budget." Nutter said he must close 11 of 54 branches, but in January a federal judge put the closings on hold.

Circulation, however, moved in the opposite direction: up. Checkouts of books, CDs, and DVDs are up 15 percent at the main library in Modesto, Calif., Boston Globe columnist Derrick Z. Jackson wrote on Jan. 3. In Boulder, Colo., circulation of job-hunting materials is up 14 percent. Usage of the Newark (N.J.) Public Library is up 17 percent. Library card requests have increased 27 percent in the last half of 2008 in San Francisco. The Boise (Idaho) Public Library reported a 61 percent increase in new library cards in 2008. In Brantley County, Georgia, library computer usage was up 26 percent in the last quarter.

The Boston Public Library is no different, Jackson wrote. “New library cards are up 32.7 percent from July to November of 2008, compared with the same period in 2007. Visits are up 13 percent, from 1.4 million visits to 1.6 million. Checkouts of books, CDs, and DVDs are up 7.2 percent overall over the last fiscal year.”

And yet ...

Finally, the recurring question: Is money spent on libraries money well spent? Add Wisconsin to the long list of those who answer, “Yes!” A study commissioned by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and conducted by NorthStar Economics Inc. found that “Wisconsin public libraries contribute to the Wisconsin economy and are of growing importance to the citizens of the state. ... The return on investment in library services is \$4.06 for each dollar of taxpayer investment.” The results of this study, published May 1, 2008, echo conclusions drawn from studies done in Indiana, Ohio, Florida and several other states—see “Public libraries are a good investment,” in the ALA’s *State of America’s Libraries 2007*.

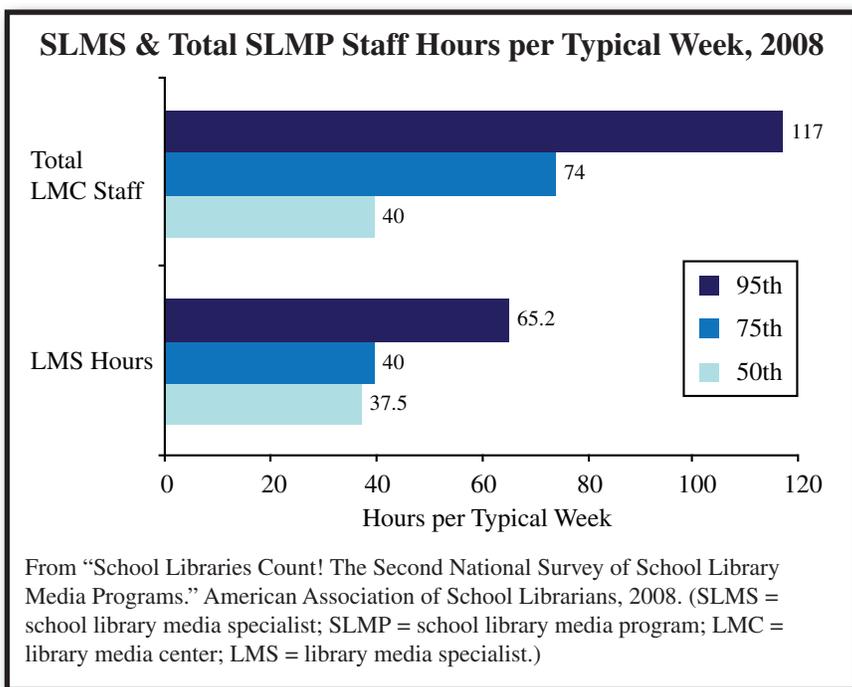
SCHOOL LIBRARIES

School library media programs hold their own in difficult times

In tough economic times, the status quo becomes an acceptable outcome—for now.

Data from 2008 concerning school library media programs revealed little significant change in their status from the prior year. The good news: about half continued to be staffed full time by a school library media specialist. The not-so-good news: the specialist found little time for professional activities outside the center itself.

And sometimes, the news was downright bad. In April 2008, the Mesa, Arizona, public school system—the state’s largest, with 74,000 students—decided to remove all teacher-librarians from 87 schools over three years, mainly because of a deficit of more than \$20 million caused by declining enrollment and a state budget deficit of \$1.2 billion. (ALA press release, April 21, 2008)



Nationally, half the 6,998 school library media programs (SLMP) that responded to a survey conducted in 2008 have almost one full-time equivalent school library media specialist (SLMS)—37.5 hours per typical week—and total program staff hours reflecting full-time coverage.

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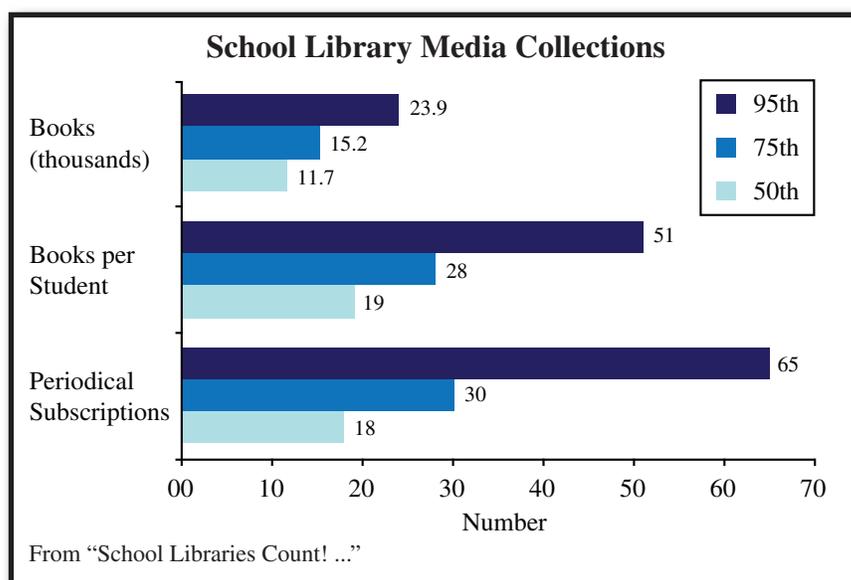
These figures, from a survey conducted by the American Association of School Librarians, a division of ALA, suggests that, while a full-time school library media specialist is present about half the time, they typically have only 2½ hours a week of staff support, making that the only time they are free to meet with their principals, attend faculty or committee meetings, deliver in-service professional development opportunities to teachers, or work with teachers and students in their classrooms.

The top quarter of responding school library media programs have a full-time library media specialist—40 hours per typical week—and almost two full-time equivalents of total staff—74 hours per week. The top five percent have more than one full-time specialist—65.2 hours per typical week—and almost three FTEs of total staff—117 hours per typical week. With access to more than one school library media specialist, teachers in these schools are more likely to enjoy the benefits of collaboration with a specialist on the design and delivery of instruction.

Several factors affect the levels of program staffing in participating schools, the survey results indicated. Generally there was more staffing at higher grade levels and in larger schools. Average program staffing was lower in the West than in other regions and highest in the South and Northeast. Programs at schools serving a larger proportion of low-income students average somewhat fewer hours of library media specialist and total library staffing. Programs at schools in the central cities and suburbs of metropolitan areas averaged more hours of school library media specialist and total media program staffing than schools in outlying towns and rural areas (the differences here were small but statistically significant).

Other findings from the report:

- School library media specialists spend the great majority of their time delivering instruction and less time on school library media program budget matters and on planning with teachers.
- Half of school library media centers from which a survey response was received are open at least 38 hours per week. The top quarter are open 40 hours per week, and the top five percent for 45 hours.
- Half of responding schools reported collections of at least 11,700 books—or 19 volumes per student. The top quarter reported at least 15,200 volumes—or about 28 per student—and the top five percent, at least 23,900 volumes—and over 51 volumes per student.



New federal law requires schools to teach Web safety

A new federal law requires schools receiving federal e-rate discounts on telecommunications services and Internet access to educate their students “about appropriate online behavior, including interacting with other individuals on social networking sites and in chat rooms and cyberbullying awareness and response.”

Signed into law Oct. 10, 2008, by President George W. Bush, the Broadband Data Improvement Act establishes an Online Safety and Technology Working Group to evaluate safety education efforts, parental control technologies, and filtering and blocking software, according to *American Libraries Online*. The Federal Trade Commission is charged with carrying out “a nationwide program to increase public awareness and provide education regarding strategies to promote the safe use of the Internet by children.”

However, Lynne Bradley, director of the American Library Association Office of Government Relations, said the ALA is reacting cautiously to the Broadband Data Improvement Act because the e-rate provision was attached hastily and no funding has been appropriated for the education program.

The legislation effectively supplants the Deleting Online Predators Act, which was introduced in 2006, passed in the House, but stalled in the Senate. DOPA would have required schools and libraries to block access to social networking sites and chat rooms. Many education groups, including the ALA, opposed that bill, arguing that teaching children about safe and appropriate online behavior was a better approach.

Library media expenditures

The budgets of most school library media programs cover expenditures on information resources (e.g., books, audio and video formats, periodical and database subscriptions) and operating costs. Expenditures on salaries, wages, and employee benefits are part of the overall school or district payroll.

Half the responding schools report spending at least \$7,000 annually—or \$12.06 per student—on their library media programs. The top quarter spend \$13,500—or \$21.02—and the top five percent, \$35,000—or \$48.02. The per-student median, \$12.06, is only two-thirds of the cost of a single work of fiction (\$17.63, according to the March 1, 2008, issue of *School Library Journal*) and about a third of the cost of a single non-fiction title (\$27.04). Even the 95th-percentile expenditure, \$48.02, would not quite cover the cost of a second non-fiction volume.

Finally, individual visits to school library media centers increased significantly at the schools that responded to both the 2007 and 2008 surveys: up 22.7 percent for the 50th percentile, up 12.5 percent for the 75th percentile, and up almost 25 percent for the 95th percentile. There were no major year-to-year differences in the responses with regard to the other variables.

ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Essential parts of the “intellectual infrastructure”

Academic libraries are an essential part of our “intellectual infrastructure,” and if the nation’s future is going to be idea-driven, libraries have an increasingly important role to play in supporting student success and faculty research and productivity, all of which are critical to stimulating the knowledge economy, says Erika Linke, president of the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL).

President Obama’s stimulus plan and his 2010 budget proposal expand federal support for students and their families as well as institutions of higher education.

But even with stimulus funding, the economic downturn is sending a tidal wave through academic institutions and their libraries, Linke says, and belt-tightening may be inadequate in addressing the economic challenges. Most universities, colleges, and community colleges are grappling with these serious financial threats; some institutions are reducing library hours and/or staff, Linke says.

“Academic librarians teach students to use information resources ethically as a stepping stone to develop their own insights and ideas—abilities that are highly prized in our entrepreneurial world.”

—Erika Linke, ACRL

Lack of funding also affects collections, and “library resources of all types, paper and online, will be reduced,” Linke said. “I don’t know if, in a tightened economic climate, institutions will opt for less face-to-face instruction and more teaching online. This represents another challenge for academic libraries: How do we support faculty teaching in this new environment in a Web 2.0 world?”

Linke cited the National Institutes of Health (NIH) mandate on open access and the complex Google book settlement of October 2008 (see section on scholarly communication, below) and wondered what impact these developments might have on scholarly publishing.

Academic librarians are making significant progress on understanding how students learn and how libraries can best serve undergraduates—and how their use of the library fits into how we think about the future. Linke cited a 2007 study conducted at the University of Rochester that sought to answer the question, “What do students *really* do when they write their research papers?”

“We are educating people to learn, and so we have to ‘know how to know,’” Linke said. “That learning has to continue, and lifelong learning skills in information technology are going to be more important than ever. Academic librarians teach students to use information resources ethically as a stepping stone to develop their own insights and ideas—abilities that are highly prized in our entrepreneurial world.”

Finally, Linke said, “2009 will be a year of economic and political changes with new priorities, and new issues. Change brings the opportunity to re-envision the present and to create the future.”

Research librarians’ salaries outpace inflation, but recruitment is still an issue

Research librarians’ salaries outperformed inflation for the fourth consecutive year, according to the Association of Research Libraries’ Annual Salary Survey 2007–08, and telecommuting, which once seemed impractical for librarians, showed signs of becoming a viable option for employees in both technical and public services, according to an article in *C&RL News*.

Still, recruitment and retention continued to be major issues for academic library managers, Teresa Y. Neely and Megan K. Beard said in an article in *C&RL News*. Accordingly, the ACRL established a recruitment and retention wiki that brings together resources that describe best practices for keeping new staff and providing an atmosphere for professional growth.

Mean Salaries Paid, Academic Libraries, 2007 and 2008

	Regional Salary Data 2007	Regional Salary Data 2008	Difference in Mean Salaries	Difference in Mean Salaries	N (2008)
Director/dean/chief officer	88,902	94,567	+ \$5,665	+ 6.37%	389
Deputy/associate/assistant director	77,372	80,062	+ \$2,690	+ 5.25%	528
Department head/branch manager/coordinator/senior manager	65,270	61,412	- \$3,858	- 5.91%	451
Librarian who does not supervise	54,959	54,684	- \$275	- 0.50%	2,289
Manager/supervisor of support staff	51,666	54,376	+ \$2,710	+ 5.25%	615
Beginning librarian	48,365	44,917	- \$3,448	- 7.13%	279
Total					4,551

Source: Bragg, Jamie. “Many Academic and Public Librarian Positions Face Wage Decline; Inflation Erodes Salary Gains for Many Others.” *ALA-APA Library Worklife*, Vol. 5, No. 10, October 2008.

The evolving world of scholarly communication

As 2008 began, the NIH started requiring grantees to deposit final manuscripts of their peer-reviewed research articles in the NIH online archive, PubMed Central, within a year of publication in a journal. The move means any interested individual with access to the Internet can read the results of research funded by taxpayer dollars. The NIH is the world's largest funder of non-classified research, public or private, and its research grants result in 80,000 peer-reviewed articles per year. Its \$29.2 billion budget for 2008 was larger than the gross domestic product of 124 nations.

The NIH requirement is emblematic of the evolving ways in which scholars are communicating their research findings. Open-access journals and repositories proliferated faster in 2008 than in any previous year; the Directory of Open Access Journals grew by 812 peer-reviewed journals, or 27 percent, in 2008. Worldwide, more than five new repositories per week were launched during 2008. Still, opposition to open access remains fierce. A sweeping, publisher-supported bill—the Fair Copyright in Research Works Act, which would amend copyright law to overturn the NIH policy and ban similar measures—was shelved in September after being introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives.

On the plus side, experiments in scholarly communication are flourishing. For example, in the Sponsoring Consortium for Open Access Publishing in Particle Physics (SCOAP3), a project of the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN), all the partners who support publishing in particle physics, including libraries, are being asked to redirect subscription monies to make the literature of the discipline fully open to any researcher. Academic libraries support these new models, in some cases becoming publishers themselves.

Harvard University's Faculty of Arts and Sciences voted in February 2008 to give the university permission to post its peer-reviewed scholarly articles in an institutional repository—and requires faculty to retain their right to do so when signing publisher agreements. Key aspects of the policy are that scholars and institutions should have more control over how their work is used and disseminated and that they have a responsibility to distribute their scholarship as widely as possible. Especially significant, this was the first such university mandate in the United States and was adopted by the faculty—the vote was unanimous—rather than by administrators.

The Harvard Law faculty followed suit three months later, and in June, the faculty of Stanford University's School of Education voted to pass their own open-access mandate, based on Harvard's policy. More colleges and universities are considering open-access policies and are expected to follow suit this year.

Academic research libraries in general are offering more publishing services and starting to view publishing as an important part of their mission. A report written by Karla Hahn, director of the Office of Scholarly Communication at the Association of Research Libraries, showed that 44 percent of the 80 responding ARL libraries offered publishing services and another 21 percent were in the process of planning such services. A University of California task force has recommended establishing a university-based publishing program to blunt the effect of commercialization and to better serve scholars, especially in emerging disciplines.

The Library as strategic investment

In this era of increased accountability, particularly given the economic downturn, academic and research librarians consider it imperative to demonstrate the value of their services and resources to the educational mission of their institutions in terms of supporting both student success and faculty productivity. A soon-to-be-published study commissioned by the ACRL found that information literacy is now accepted as a key student success outcome by post-secondary institutions and accreditation commissions. Indeed, information literacy outcomes are among the specific metrics most often cited by academic administrators to show that libraries have a critical role to play, itself evidence of a notable shift in awareness.

It is important to have data to demonstrate the value of library resources. In a pioneering study, Paula Kaufmann, of the University of Illinois, published a widely discussed attempt at developing a “quantitative measure that recognizes the library’s value in supporting the university’s strategic goals.” This study sought to “confirm the benefits of using electronic resources and the resulting impact on [faculty] productivity over a 10-year period.” In the study, a return-on-investment (ROI) calculator tool was developed to “help evaluate the role that the library plays in their [faculty] research and grant processes,” and comments from survey respondents indicated “a strong dependency on the library for their research and grant proposal needs.” This study should generate additional research in this area.

In the past year, assessment activities have only increased in their importance relative to the academic enterprise, and librarians are actively engaged in developing new measures and metrics to demonstrate quality, value and effectiveness. An assessment conference held in 2008 attracted 70 percent more attendees than the one held in 2006.

Academic libraries address issues of environment and sustainability

An opinion piece in C&RL News asserted that the current rate of environmental consumption within academic libraries cannot be maintained and that library consumption is becoming economically unsustainable, threatening the core library mission of providing free and open access to information for all users.

The writer was not a voice in the wilderness. An ACRL “OnPoint Chat session” in May 2008 addressed issues of the environment and sustainability on campuses and in communities, and a blog, *Going green @ your library*, lists ideas, practices, tools, and techniques to help libraries become more environmentally friendly, save money, and possibly even raise money for their library in the process.

One small sign of progress: The Ames (Iowa) Public Library and the Iowa State University Library, which are only about two miles apart but had long exchanged interlibrary loan materials by mail, which required packages to be routed through Des Moines, 31 miles away, decided to reduce their carbon footprint by using a bicycle delivery service. (For examples of “green” libraries built in 2008, see “Library construction and renovation,” later in this report.

LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY

Public access internet services critical to the role of the library, by metropolitan status and poverty

Public Services	Metropolitan Status			Poverty Level			
	Urban	Suburban	Rural	Low	Medium	High	Overall
Provide education resources and databases... for K-12 students	80.9% (n=1,934)	82.1% (n=4,159)	75.6% (n=5,734)	78.3% (n=9,958)	80.7% (n=1,738)	82.9% (n=131)	78.7% (n=11,827)
...for students in higher education	40.9% (n=977)	33.7% (n=1,710)	40.3% (n=3,055)	36.7% (n=4,672)	46.9% (n=1,010)	37.3% (n=59)	38.2% (n=5,742)
...for home schooling	21.0% (n=502)	29.5% (n=1,493)	39.9% (n=3,025)	34.0% (n=4,321)	30.9% (n=665)	22.0% (n=35)	33.4% (n=5,020)
...for adult /continuing ed. students	51.9% (n=1,241)	43.5% (n=2,202)	47.5% (n=3,604)	46.8% (n=5,954)	47.4% (n=1,021)	45.6% (n=72)	46.9% (n=7,047)
Provide info...for local economic development	8.1% (n=193)	7.2% (n=366)	6.6% (n=503)	6.9% (n=876)	7.6% (n=164)	13.8% (n=22)	7.1% (n=1,062)
...about state and local business opportunities	8.0% (n=190)	6.2% (n=314)	7.7% (n=582)	7.3% (n=931)	6.3% (n=135)	12.7% (n=20)	7.2% (n=1,068)
...for local business support	12.1% (n=290)	10.1% (n=512)	4.4% (n=335)	7.3% (n=932)	8.2% (n=177)	17.7% (n=29)	7.6% (n=1,137)
...for college applicants	9.8% (n=235)	10.3% (n=523)	17.6% (n=1,337)	13.4% (n=1,711)	17.0% (n=367)	11.3% (n=18)	13.9% (n=2,095)
...about the library's community	25.5% (n=610)	31.2% (n=1,582)	21.3% (n=1,613)	25.9% (n=3,291)	22.5% (n=484)	19.0% (n=30)	25.3% (n=3,805)
...or databases regarding investments	9.5% (n=226)	8.9% (n=452)	3.8% (n=289)	6.7% (n=855)	4.6% (n=99)	8.2% (n=13)	6.4% (n=967)
Provide access to govt. info. (e.g., tax forms, Medicare, paying traffic tickets)	47.9% (n=1,145)	52.5% (n=2,662)	60.1% (n=4,554)	55.9% (n=7,111)	54.0% (n=1,163)	54.4% (n=86)	55.6% (n=8,361)
Provide computer and Internet skills training	49.9% (n=1,193)	40.4% (n=2,045)	31.9% (n=2,416)	37.0% (n=4,706)	40.4% (n=869)	50.0% (n=79)	37.6% (n=5,654)
Provide services for job seekers	58.0% (n=1,386)	66.2% (n=3,352)	60.9% (n=4,616)	62.3% (n=7,934)	62.0% (n=1,335)	53.2% (n=84)	62.2% (n=9,354)
Provide services to immigrant populations	20.2% (n=483)	19.4% (n=984)	15.5% (n=1,193)	17.8% (n=2,259)	17.0% (n=366)	22.8% (n=36)	17.7% (n=2,660)
Other	19.5% (n=467)	14.0% (n=710)	16.9% (n=1,283)	16.8% (n=2,136)	14.0% (n=302)	12.7% (n=20)	16.3% (n=2,458)

Weighted missing values, n=1419. Key: -- : No data to report. * : Insufficient data to report. Will not total 100%, as respondents could select more than one option. Source: ALA Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study, 2007-2008.

IT is on the rise @ your library

Technology became an increasingly major component of public-library services in 2008 as demands for and availability of information technology increased. Connected public libraries offer a range of services and resources to the communities they serve, including licensed resources, homework and education support, training, and e-government assistance. (See chart, preceding page).

Libraries' technology features, 2008		
	#	%
Total number of libraries	873	100
Library website features		
OPAC/online catalog	832	95.3
Library purchased on-line databases	758	86.8
Personalized patron accounts	682	78.1
On-line reference services	645	73.9
Library website contents		
Programming information/ events calendar	836	95.8
Children/Young Adult page(s)	729	83.5
Community links	739	84.7
Library friends' page(s)	563	64.5
Basic library information	856	98.1
Library staff created content	631	72.3
Libraries that have website	857	98.2
Wireless Internet access	776	88.9
Wireless extending outside the library	351	40.2
Access to locally produced digitized collections	382	43.8
Virtual reference services via		
E-mail/Web form	526	60.3
Chat reference	275	31.5
Instant messaging	158	18.1
Filtered Internet access	623	71.4
Staff	507	58.1
Patron	85	9.7

Source: Public Library Data Service Statistical Report, 2008

A majority of libraries surveyed for the Public Library Data Service (PLDS) Statistical Report, a project of the Public Library Association, reported that the following features available through

their library websites: on-line public-access catalogues (OPAC), online databases, personalized patron accounts, and online reference services. Almost all the libraries have a website containing a calendar of events, and most provide community links, children and young-adult pages, staff-created pages, and acknowledgement of library friends. The proportion of libraries having these features was the same as or greater than in past years.

In the area of technology service, 89 percent of libraries responding offered Wi-Fi inside their libraries, 44 percent provided access to locally produced digitized collections, and 71 percent used Internet filters on library computers. The majority (60 percent) offered reference via email, followed by online chat and instant message.

School library media programs keeping pace — or setting the pace

School library media programs have also been revolutionized by technology over the past decade or so. Internet-capable computers, both in the school library media center and throughout the school, are networked to provide access to library catalogs, licensed databases, and the vast information resources on the World Wide Web. These online resources extend the reach of a media program beyond the media center's walls into every classroom, lab, and office in the school. And, in many cases, remote access allows students and teachers to access these resources from home.

Half of responding schools report at least 16 computers in the school library media center and at least another 112 elsewhere in the school. The top quarter of

respondents have at least 33 media center computers and another 200 elsewhere in the school, while the top five percent have at least 68 media center computers and another 500 elsewhere in the school. The numbers of computers of both types tend to rise dramatically with grade level and total school enrollment.

Online databases also are becoming a ubiquitous feature of school library media programs. Almost three-quarters of survey respondents reported offering remote database access.

E-books and print books are on a par among students when it comes to research or class assignments, with almost equal numbers of students using each type, according to ebrary's 2008 Global Student E-book Survey. Fifty-one percent of students would "very often or often"

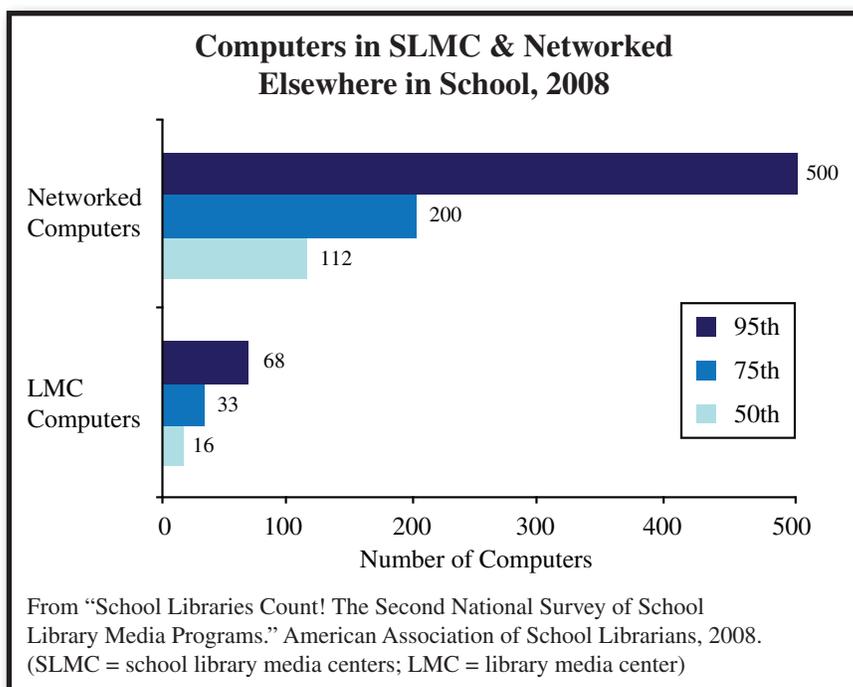
opt to use electronic versions of books rather than print versions, compared with 32 percent who "sometimes" prefer e-books and 17 percent who always use the print version.

- Other findings from the ebrary survey: E-books rank among the top resources students consider trustworthy, along with print materials such as books, textbooks, reference (dictionaries, encyclopedias, maps), and journals.
- Google and other search engines are leading tools for students conducting research or completing class assignments. Other top resources include e-books, print books, e-reference resources such as online dictionaries, encyclopedias and maps, and Wikipedia.
- Fifty-seven percent of students view instruction in information literacy as very important, 38 percent consider it somewhat important, and 5 percent find it not important.

Academic libraries maintain leading role in digitizing print collections

Academic libraries maintain their leading role in partnering to scan and digitize print book collections, with the potential to provide unprecedented access to millions of volumes. Large-scale digitization initiatives include Google Book Search, Microsoft Live Search Books, Open Content Alliance, and the Million Book Project. Critics of commercial ventures question potential limitations to access, restrictions on public-domain works scanned for commercial purposes from library collections, technical specifications with digitization partners, and legal restrictions on digital preservation of copyrighted works.

One study concludes that research institutions will be pressured to justify investments in maintaining their legacy print collections. Further, consolidation of holdings in a shared storage environment can save space, and national and regional shared-storage efforts need firm support from the library community. Lastly, research libraries must consider how future selection and acquisition decisions will be shaped in light of increased online content and worldwide access to core collections, according to the study.



In what may portend a collaborative digital future, two dozen large research libraries launched a shared repository of digital collections in 2008, including scanned books, articles, special collections, and a range of “born digital” materials. Called HathiTrust (hathi, the Hindi word for elephant, is meant to evoke not only size but memory, wisdom, and strength), the venture includes the 12 universities in the Committee on Institutional Cooperation (CIC), the University of Virginia, and the 11 university libraries of the University of California (U.C.) system, with U.C.’s participation coordinated by the California Digital Library (CDL). HathiTrust started out with more than two million books — about a billion pages — nearly 16 percent of which are in the public domain and available to the public to read online. Materials protected by copyright, although not available, are nevertheless “given the full range of digital archiving services,” to allow for reliable preservation. Content is expected to grow rapidly as current members and new partners contribute more digitized content.

Further experiments foster books that are “born digital.” Notably, the New York University Division of Libraries and the Institute for the Future of the Book formed MediaCommons, a partnership to build digital infrastructure models for how university presses could expand their publishing programs to include digital and networked formats. This experiment in collaboration should demonstrate possible solutions to the complex issues facing university presses and scholarly communication in the humanities, where scholars most often publish books rather than journal articles.

Digitization fosters collaboration: More than half (53 percent) of the more than 100 digitization projects in museums and academic, public and special libraries that took part in an international study conducted by Research and Markets’ Primary Research Group have collaborated with another department to work jointly on a project, and almost half (49 percent) of the organizations outsource some form of their digitization work.

COPYRIGHT AND LICENSING

Settlement reached in Google Library Project lawsuits

After two years of negotiations, Google and author and publisher groups reached a proposed settlement that requires the approval of the presiding judge in a lawsuit over the search-engine company’s scanning of copyrighted books.

Under the settlement, reached in October 2008, Google was to pay \$125 million to resolve a class-action lawsuit brought in 2005 by book authors and the Authors Guild, as well as a separate suit filed by five publishers representing the membership of the Association of American Publishers, according to American Libraries Online (Oct. 29, 2008). The payment would go toward creation of a book rights registry in which authors and publishers can register works and receive compensation from institutional subscriptions and book sales.

In return, Google may show as much as 20 percent of a book’s text to users at no charge, and the whole book will be available online for a fee. Libraries, universities, and other institutions are to be offered subscriptions for online access to large collections of those books. Google’s Book Search Library Project will continue to scan in-print books from publishers not among the 20,000 members of its Partner Program; they will be searchable, but none of the text will be available. Public and academic libraries in the United States will be offered free, full-text access to Google’s digitized collection at a single designated computer.

Google will share revenue from online book sales and advertisements with copyright holders.

Google partners Stanford University, the University of California, and University of Michigan announced their support for the settlement agreement in a joint news release. The ability to search and preview millions of books online “is a service that libraries, because of copyright restrictions, could not offer on their own,” said

University of Michigan Librarian Paul N. Courant. The Harvard University Library, however, announced that it will not take part in the program’s scanning of copyright-protected works. One of the original library partners in the project, Harvard plans to continue its policy of allowing Google to scan only books whose copyrights have expired, the *Harvard Crimson* reported Oct. 30.

And a cofounding member of the Open Content Alliance, which was established several months after Google announced its book-scanning initiative, expressed doubts about the settlement. “On the one hand, one admires all of Google’s inventions,” Rick Prelinger, board president of the Internet Archive, a not-for-profit organization that hosts an online digital library of one million public-domain books, said in the Oct. 29 *New York Times*. “But when you start to see a single point of access developing for world culture, by default, it is disturbing.”

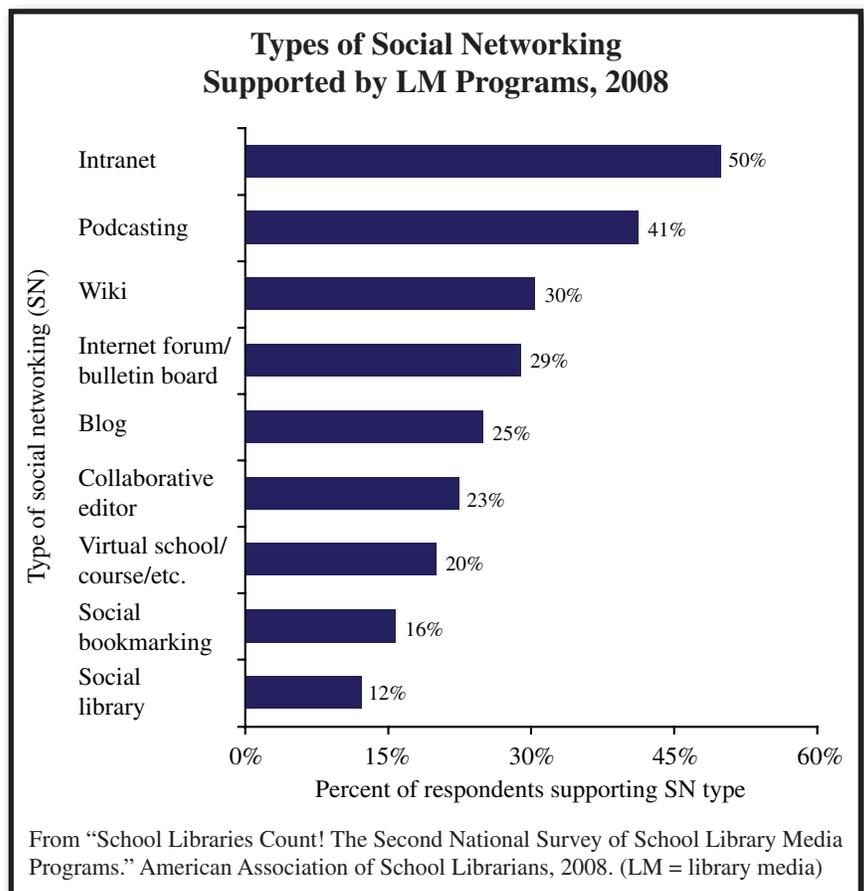
Corynne McSherry, staff attorney for the Electronic Frontier Foundation, which advocates Internet free-speech rights, said, “I kind of wish this case had gone to litigation. ... A ruling from the court would have been good for everyone. It potentially could have fostered other offerings, based on that legal certainty” that would have stemmed from a Google win, she told the *San Francisco Chronicle* (Oct. 29).

Finally, to help the library community better unscramble the complex terms and conditions of the settlement, the ALA and the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) released “A Guide for the Perplexed: Libraries and the Google Library Project Settlement,” by Jonathan Band. The guide outlines and simplifies the settlement’s provisions, with special emphasis on those that apply directly to libraries. Also, the executive boards of ALA, the ARL and the Association of College & Research Libraries will jointly file an *amicus* brief in federal court that identifies the library community’s issues and concerns with the proposed settlement.

SOCIAL NETWORKING

Social networking — online communities of people who share interests and activities or who are interested in exploring the interests and activities of others — encompasses a wide variety of types, including:

- Virtual worlds (e.g., Second Life), schools, and courses.
- Existing “brand name” sites (e.g., My Space, Facebook) and user-created ones (e.g., Nings).
- Collaborative tools (e.g., wikis such as Wikipedia, editors such as Google Documents, social libraries such as Library Thing).
- Other modes of communication such as podcasts, blogs, forums or bulletin boards, chat, texting, and instant messaging.



Several social networking options are beginning to receive instructional support within school library media programs (see chart). Instructional use and library media support of most of these options increases steadily with school level.

Other social networking types are prohibited by a majority of schools that responded to the survey as a matter of either school or district policy. These prohibited social networking types include existing networking sites (84 percent); instant messaging, texting, and chat (all 62 percent), user-created social networking sites (60 percent), and virtual worlds (46 percent).

But students cannot be unaware of the major role on-line social networking played in last year's presidential election. *New York Times* political analyst Adam Nagourney noted in an election-day article that Barack Obama's successful campaign rewrote the rules on how to reach voters, raise money, organize supporters, manage the media, track and mold public opinion, and wage — and withstand — political attacks, including many carried by blogs that did not exist four years ago.

Gaming gains ground

Another form of social networking, gaming, also generated impressive activity at the nation's libraries in 2008, as evidenced by a national survey and the success of National Gaming Day @ your library.

The web-based survey of public, academic, and school libraries (plus a few special libraries) was conducted for the second year by the Syracuse University School of Information Studies' Library Game Lab. About 40 percent of the 404 libraries that responded circulate games; PC games were the most frequently circulated type, offered by 25 percent, but the number of libraries circulating console and handheld games rose slightly from 2006 to 2007, while those circulating PC games and board/card games decreased slightly.

Game programs were rarely educational in nature (only 8 percent of the time), and tournaments were a part of a gaming program only about 35 percent of the time. In about 30 percent of the cases reported, the gaming program was linked to a summer reading program.

Libraries were asked to indicate the single most important goal of the gaming program. Drawing in the underserved was the most common goal, followed by increasing the library's role as a community hub. Among the most common outcomes for gaming programs were:

- The reputation of the library improved with participants (65 percent).
- Users attended the gaming program and returned to the library later for non-gaming services (64 percent).
- Users attended the gaming program and also used other library services while there (61 percent).

Details of the survey, information about coming events, and a blog are available at the Library Game Lab of Syracuse website (<http://gamelab.syr.edu/>).

The National Gaming Day @ your library event, held Nov. 15, attracted more than 14,000 people of all ages, who came together in their local communities to participate in gaming events at more than 600 libraries around the country. "With the introduction of more social video games and board games, libraries continue to create and promote modern educational opportunities for their users and serve as community centers for the whole family," said ALA President Rettig. Library gamers participated in a variety of national video game tournaments during the event, supported by the ALA and 2008 sponsors Hasbro, Top Trumps, and Wizards of the Coast.

LIBRARY CONSTRUCTION AND RENOVATION

Public-library design reflects environmental concerns

The world's increased awareness of the environment was reflected in the design of several new libraries that opened in the United States in 2008. Architects aimed for low impact and sought sustainability while still responding to the rapidly evolving needs of a wide range and growing number of library users, from toddlers to senior citizens.

The Durham County (N.C.) Library takes top honors in this regard for building three 25,000–square foot branches that followed the LEED certification process. (LEED refers to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design Green Building Rating System,[™] a program of the U.S. Green Building Council, a private nonprofit organization.) Visitors and staff enjoy the use of natural light (daylight brightens 75 percent of the buildings), views of the attractive, drought-resistant landscaping, and healthier air (buildings are smoke-free, have carpet made of low-emitting, recycled fibers, and are maintained with green cleaning products).

The remains of a building demolished to make way for the South Regional library were separated, tracked, and recycled, and some of the brick from that building is being used in the new library. In fact, recycling is required for everything from building materials to the paper, bottles, and cans used by visitors and staff.

Library staff did find that some aspects of sustainable design require adjustment. The waterless urinals work well but were met with some initial concerns from staff and patrons. The photo-integrated light sensors needed some modification to prevent the auditorium lights from turning on during video presentations when someone in the audience moved. And the lighter shades of paint used to assist daylighting strategies are more likely to show scuffs, so walls require more frequent painting than with darker colors.

Here, as noted in *American Libraries* (April 2008, pp. 41-58), are other success stories from the 2008 roster of new public libraries.

- The Hercules Public Library building, in Contra Costa County, California, incorporates sophisticated solar glazing, a “cool” roof, recyclable carpet tile, and drainage. The Asian-influenced courtyard of the 20,500–square foot, \$10.4 million building helps provide natural light throughout.
- The Maplewood Branch of the Ramsey County (Minn.) Library System is next to a community park and wetlands, but architects were able to preserve more than half the existing trees on the site through careful construction staging and building orientation. The landscaping around the 31,000–square foot building features rain gardens and native grasses to filter runoff and reduce irrigation requirements. Cost: \$6.8 million.
- Built on a brownfield site, Hastings (Mich.) Public Library received LEED Gold certification for features that included low-VOC (volatile organic compound) furnishings and finishes, linoleum tabletops, condensing gas boilers, an underfloor air distribution system, vegetative roofs in the turrets, and toilet partitions made of recycled milk jugs. The 18,000–square foot structure cost \$5.35 million.
- For the renovation of the Evanston (Ill.) Public Library, about four-fifths of the material removed from the library was recycled, and all the new products were made of recycled materials.
- The new Santa Fe (N.M.) Public Library Southside branch was designed to meet LEED Silver criteria, although it was not certified for budgetary reasons. The building uses daylighting and passive solar gain to reduce heating, cooling, and lighting costs. Construction materials include Forest Stewardship Council certified woods, formaldehyde-free composite woods, and locally produced and largely recycled materials.
- A 40-foot windmill in front of the San Antonio (Tex.) Public Library's new John Igo branch functions as a gathering area and helps to power the building's water circulation pump.

Elsewhere, the Houston Public Library central branch, renovated for \$17 million, opened with a café, an art gallery, flat-screen televisions, and an additional 12,600 square feet. And libraries still play in Peoria: the Illinois city received a \$28 million bond issue to expand the downtown and Lincoln libraries, renovate another branch, and build a new one. (*Library Hotline*, June 9 and June 30, 2008).

On campus ... Ohio State library gets a boost from athletic department

The Ohio State University athletics department contributed another \$4 million—for a total of \$9 million—toward the \$109 million renovation of the OSU main library. The gutted and rebuilt William Oxley Thompson Memorial Library is set to open in fall 2009, with about 217,000 square feet renovated and 90,000 square feet of added space. The building will have full wireless Internet access, and several updates are meant to mitigate increased energy costs for the larger, more open space, Carrie Ghose wrote in *Business First* of Columbus.

Also ... The University of Chicago unveiled a plan in May to build a state-of-the-art new library, designed by Chicago-based architect Helmut Jahn and supported by a \$25 million donation from alumni Joe and Rika Mansueto; the new facility will have space for 3.5 million volumes, allowing the university to keep its entire collection on campus. ... North Carolina State University got started on its new \$114 million James B. Hunt Jr. Library on the university's Centennial Campus, adjacent to the main campus, in Raleigh. ... The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga received \$48 million from the state to plan and build a new library for the university. ... Other major expansions or renovations of academic libraries took place at Colgate University (Hamilton, N.Y.), the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee, and Appalachian State University, in Boone, North Carolina.

And looking to the future, the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) and the Library Leadership and Management Association (LLAMA) joined forces to provide a basic framework for architects, planners, and librarians embarking on planning and design of libraries for higher education.

The on-line ACRL/LLAMA Guide for Architects: Guide For Planning Higher Education Library Spaces recognizes that construction of academic library buildings entails increasingly complex challenges based on a number of issues, including providing and storing information in a multitude of formats and venues; open versus closed stacks; remote storage and automatic retrieval systems; environmental concerns; complex building use patterns, including, sometimes, 24/7 access; provision of traditional services and expanded services such as media production and presentation facilities; and partnerships with other campus services and activities such as information technology, centers for teaching excellence, or shared space for seminars, lectures, art exhibits, concerts, and other campus functions.

OUTREACH AND DIVERSITY EFFORTS

ALA's Spectrum Scholarship Program gives a boost to minority groups

The library profession continued its active efforts in 2008 both to make its ranks more accessible to members of ethnic and racial minority groups and to strengthen its outreach efforts to underserved populations.

ALA's Spectrum Scholarship Program awarded 68 grants to members of underrepresented groups to help them pursue master's degrees. Aside from making aid available to individuals with financial need, the Spectrum program provides access to a network of library professionals, ALA support in finding a position in the field, and free admission to national and local professional development events. Spectrum's professional development and leadership components also draw together diversity advocacy efforts across many library organizations, providing a model and mechanisms by which they can diversify their membership and involve proven new

leaders with diverse perspectives in their programs and initiatives. Since 2005, the Association of College & Research Libraries (ACRL) Dr. E. J. Josey Spectrum Scholar Mentor Program has provided mentors and travel grants for ALA Spectrum Scholars.

The Spectrum Scholarship Program has awarded 564 scholarships since its establishment, in 1997. Eighty-five percent of Spectrum graduates are working full time in a library or information setting; they include the library director for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, the manager of rare books and special collections for the Princeton University Library, and the librarian in a Bureau of Indian Affairs school on the Navajo Reservation in New Mexico.

The Spectrum program has received significant support in the past several years from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), an independent federal grant-making agency. The Spectrum program generally awards about 50 scholarships each year; IMLS funding provided for 119 additional scholarships in 2005-2007. In 2007, the ALA Office for Diversity learned that it would be able to continue to extend these efforts thanks to another IMLS grant, for \$872,920. The grant doubled the number of annual Spectrum Scholarship awards from 2008 to 2010 and expanded Spectrum's reach and leverage its impact through partnering with other diversity recruitment initiatives and LIS institutions.

The IMLS also sponsored the Spectrum Doctoral Fellowship, which provided full tuition and annual stipends of \$20,000 to fellows for the first two years of study to 12 doctoral fellows. Partnering LIS doctoral programs will provide full tuition and stipends to their Spectrum Fellows for all remaining years of study.

Century Scholarship program aids students with access needs

The Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies Century Scholarship program, an initiative of the ASCLA, an ALA division, and the ALA's Library Service to People with Visual or Physical Disabilities Forum, was established in 2000 through the generosity of an anonymous donor. The Century Scholarship program fulfills ALA's mission to cultivate a field of library professionals that more accurately reflects the diversity of the communities and populations it serves.

Library and information science students with access needs are encouraged to apply for the scholarship, a one-time \$2,500 award funding necessary services or accommodations to enable the winner to complete a master's or doctoral program in the field.

Univision, ALA join in promoting library use by Latinos

ALA and Univision Radio, the nation's leading Spanish-language radio group, launched a new radio campaign late in 2008 that encourages Latinos to connect with their local librarians and make use of the free materials and resources available through their libraries. The campaign — *en tu biblioteca* ("at your library") — positions librarians as a trusted source who can help library users obtain accurate information about health, entrepreneurship and small business management, education, and finances, among other things. The Univision-ALA public service announcements are airing in 10 major Latino media markets. A Spanish-language website supports the messages of the PSAs.

American Dream comes to 34 libraries

In April 2008, the ALA funded 34 public libraries in 18 states as part of the American Dream Starts @ your library. These 34 libraries successfully demonstrated community need, library capacity, project sustainability, and the determination to provide exemplary library literacy services for adult English-language learners. American Dream libraries serve urban, rural, and suburban cities and towns ranging in size from 850 to more than a million.

American Dream libraries are expanding their literacy collections, adding literacy and language programs, developing new community partnerships, building mobile computer labs, and training teachers and tutors. In the year ahead, their bibliographies, “webliographies,” training manuals, video commentaries, best practices, and lessons learned will all be added to the American Dream Toolkit (www.americandreamtoolkit.org). The American Dream program is funded by Dollar General.

Number of bookmobiles continues to increase

Even in a world of libraries that can be very high-tech, or low-tech, or even no-tech, the number of mobile library service vehicles continues to increase (more than 930 in 2008, vs. 825 nationwide in 2005). Bookmobiles still visit schools, but they also circulate a wider variety of materials and have more varied destinations; some are specifically designed to provide services to targeted groups, such as pre-school children, senior citizen homes, adult education centers, drug and alcohol rehabilitation facilities, and even correctional facilities. Bookmobile use has surged during the current economic downturn, paralleling the increased use of fixed libraries.

Many bookmobiles have low floors for easy entry, and many also provide Internet access. Manufacturers of bookmobiles have responded to changing conditions, designing vehicles that are more user-friendly in specific ways. But in many places in the United States, “your father’s bookmobile” is still the best way to serve people, traveling out to a rural setting.

Membership in the four-year-old Association of Bookmobile and Outreach Services (ABOS), begun under the auspices of Clarion University of Pennsylvania, also continued to increase in 2008, topping 300 by year’s end. The ABOS annual conference, the second that the organization ran independently, drew about 295 people to Columbus, Ohio.

Good Health Information @ your library

In an effort to improve awareness of health issues and spread information, the ALA Office for Literacy and Outreach Services, in conjunction with the National Library of Medicine (NLM), has developed the Good Health Information website (www.ala.org/goodhealth). The new website provides tutorials and a simple contents page to help users access MedlinePlus, the NLM health information website. MedlinePlus brings together authoritative information from the NLM, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and other government agencies and health-related organizations. MedlinePlus also has extensive information about drugs, an illustrated medical encyclopedia, interactive patient tutorials, and up-to-date health news.

WASHINGTON SCENE

ALA explores role in economic recovery

With the economic downturn deepening and more and more Americans turning to their local libraries for no-fee Internet access and free employment-related services, the ALA Washington Office in 2008 continued to explore ways to secure funding for libraries as part of an economic stimulus package. ALA Washington staff met with advisers for Barack Obama and John McCain in October to discuss ALA priorities, and in a Dec. 2 address to the National Governors Association, President-elect Obama cited library closures as one of the “drastic measures already being taken to balance state budgets” and recognized the effect they have on communities.

ALA President Jim Rettig submitted a post-election report, “Opening the ‘Window to a Larger World’: Libraries’ Role in Changing America,” to the Obama-Biden Transition Team. In conjunction with the report,

the ALA Washington Office also worked with the Transition Team and later with members of Congress on many other issues, including:

- Proposals for libraries to help the public in looking for work, an effort that would include two years of supplemental funding for public and community college libraries to stay open longer and help people prepare for job certifications, GED exams, and résumé preparation.
- Possible funding for construction projects to strengthen libraries' infrastructure.
- Possible modifications of the e-rate program and broadband connectivity.

The Washington Office also suggested that an effective way to create 68,000 new, professional jobs in a predominantly female profession would be to require that every K-12 school have a school library headed by a school library media specialist.

Administration pushes broadband connectivity as an economic engine

The Obama Administration is placing a priority on broadband connectivity as an economic engine, and the ALA Washington Office is continuing to emphasize the key role libraries should play in this arena. In a study, *Libraries Connect Communities: Public Library Funding & Technology Access Study 2006-2007*, 73 percent of public libraries reported that they were the only source of free public access to computers and the Internet in their communities, and 52 percent reported that their connectivity speed was insufficient some or all of the time, an increase of about 6 percent from a year earlier.

Working with a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the ALA's Office for Information Technology Policy (OITP) began to provide research and expertise that will help state library agencies develop and implement strategies to ensure library broadband connections are sustainable. The OITP continued work on the "Encouraging State Library E-rate Participation" project in 2008, holding two training sessions attended by state library E-rate coordinators from nearly every state. This project continues to show positive results in terms of the number of libraries participating in the e-rate program and the improved quality of library applications submitted.

In April 2008, the OITP released "Regional Library Cooperatives and the Future of Broadband," a report detailing the best practices, successful strategies, and challenges of regional library cooperatives (RLCs) as they help libraries obtain high-speed connectivity. The report came out of an invitational meeting organized by the OITP for selected RLCs that provide broadband services to develop a model or models of how these cooperatives organized, implemented, and operated these services. One goal of the meeting and the report was to help other RLCs evaluate the feasibility of becoming broadband providers themselves.

Loan forgiveness for librarians in low-income areas

Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act in 2008 demonstrated Congress's understanding of the critical role libraries and librarians serve in education. The act extended loan forgiveness for librarians, promoting a more diverse population of librarians by encouraging more students to pursue a career in that field. Specifically, the act applies to librarians with a master's degree working in an elementary or secondary school eligible for aid under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act or a public library serving an area containing such a school.

The bill authorized discretionary forgiveness of most kinds of loans of \$2,000 a year (to a maximum of \$10,000) for service in "areas of national need." Under this program, librarians are specifically listed as an "area of national need" as long as the individual is employed full time in a high-poverty area for five consecutive years.

Good grades for Literacy Program

The second evaluation of the Improving Literacy Through School Libraries (LSL) Program released by the U.S. Department of Education indicated that students attending schools participating in LSL do better on state reading tests than students in non-LSL schools. Specifically, the study stated that in schools that participated in LSL in 2003-04, the proportion of students who met or exceeded the proficiency requirements on state reading assessments increased by 2.7 percentage points more than the increase observed among non-LSL schools.

LSL grants help Local Education Agencies improve reading achievement by providing students with increased access to up-to-date school library materials; well-equipped, technologically advanced school library media centers; and professionally certified school library media specialists. The evaluation also noted that grantees roughly tripled their expenditures on books, subscriptions, and computer hardware, while non-grantees showed little change.

LSL is one of the most successful programs in No Child Left Behind but has never been funded at even 10 percent of the authorized level.

Library advocates work with World Intellectual Property Organization

The Library Copyright Alliance (LCA) continues to support the work of three international copyright advocates who represent library- and user-rights interests in meetings of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The advocates participate in WIPO sessions on programs of Traditional Knowledge; Genetic Resources and Traditional Cultural Expressions/Folklore; the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights; and the Committee on Development and Intellectual Property. The LCA comprises five major library associations: the American Association of Law Libraries, the ALA, the Association of Research Libraries, the Medical Library Association, and the Special Libraries Association.

The OITP has also been exploring concerns regarding access, preservation, and protection of traditional cultural expressions. In November 2008, librarians, archivists, scholars, and members of indigenous communities met in Washington, D.C., for an OITP-sponsored conference titled "Cultural Heritage and Living Culture: Defining The U.S. Library Position on Access and Protection of Traditional Cultural Expression." Key issues and viewpoints of traditional cultures and libraries were presented through case studies and discussion of various models for access and protection. Participants also explored intellectual freedom concerns, such as freedom of speech, open inquiry, and respect of diversity.

The conference was the first step in bringing these issues to the broader ALA and library communities, and the OITP has begun drafting library principles for addressing traditional cultural expressions.

Around the nation's capital ...

The ALA Washington Office began an initiative in November 2008, Veteran's Information @ your library, designed to respond to a need for veterans' information to be more readily available in U.S. libraries. During the week of Veterans Day, a pilot program of libraries participated by displaying information about the Post-9/11 GI Bill and posting it to the libraries' websites.

Other activities focused mainly on addressing specific library closings or threats of closings, as well as developing larger strategies to advocate for federal libraries:

- The Army moved its Reimer Digital Library behind a password-protected firewall— but after the ALA took an interest decided to make it available once again to the public. The Reimer Digital Library, the Army Training and Doctrine Command's digital library, contains field manuals, technical manuals, and other publications.

- Discussions were held with key military librarians as well as with the chair of the Federal and Armed Forces Libraries Round Table (FAFLRT) on the most realistic options for preventing the closure of more base libraries.
- The ALA monitored the compliance of the Environmental Protection Agency in reopening the libraries it had closed in 2006. The fiscal year 2008 omnibus appropriations bill signed by President Bush in December 2007 ordered the EPA to re-open many of its libraries, which it did by Sept. 30, 2008. ALA staff attended the reopening of the EPA headquarters library.
- Librarians from all branches of the military came together in September 2008 to announce new additions to Military OneSource, an effort that increased online library offerings for all service members and their families. The new offerings will provide a more convenient way for service members and their families to access materials, and the collaboration will also save the different branches from buying the same materials separately.
- Finally, the ALA, in conjunction with the FAFLRT, made site visits at local military libraries and the public libraries that serve those areas to learn the specific needs and challenges of military families and what role it would be appropriate for the ALA to take in meeting the needs of military libraries.

LIBRARY ADVOCACY AND LEGISLATION

Short- and long-term victories for “Spokane moms”

In Washington state, the “Spokane moms” grassroots campaign to secure state funding for school libraries made important advances in 2008. Begun in late 2007 by three determined women, the movement coalesced into the Washington Coalition for School Libraries and Information Technology (WCSLit) and persuaded the state Legislature to approve one-year “bridge” funding of \$4 million. The bill provided all school districts with funding for a certain number of certified-teacher librarians, based on the size of the district, and allocated \$12 per child for acquisition of materials. School libraries in the state were previously funded locally.

A second, perhaps more lasting achievement was the formation of a task force comprising 14 legislators and representatives from the public school system that spent more than a year looking at the research and issued a report in which teacher-librarians are listed as “core teachers,” not support staff (nurses, counselors, social workers, school psychologists, etc.) as in the past. The campaign for permanent funding for teacher-librarians continued into 2009 as that state and others struggled with burgeoning budget problems.

Children’s books get one-year stay from anti-lead law

Librarians in January 2009 won a one-year stay of enforcement of a new law that would require testing for lead in books geared to children younger than 12. Some librarians feared either having to ban children from their facilities or to cordon off the book collections in youth services areas until federal regulators ascertained that the books complied with the Consumer Product Safety Improvement Act.

The reprieve until Feb. 10, 2010, came just days after representatives of the Consumer Product Safety Commission heard the concerns of the publishing industry during ALA’s Midwinter Meeting. Acknowledging the burden of imposing a testing mandate before there are definitive laboratory procedures for children’s books, the Jan. 30 notice indicated that such previously unregulated items might receive “appropriate relief” from testing and certification if the publishing industry “provide[s] the additional information requested by our staff in a timely manner.”

Still, Emily Sheketoff, ALA Washington Office executive director, cautioned that “this announcement is not an end to this problem. ... [L]ibraries are still asking to be exempt from regulation under this law.” (*American Libraries Online*, Jan. 30, 2009)

Academic libraries keep an eye on legislation

Academic libraries continued to monitor potential legislation that would either enhance or hinder their ability to provide access to information. Issues of particular interest in 2008 included:

- Digital reproduction for preservation and inter-library loan. There is growing concern that provisions of the Copyright Act may need revision to address issues arising from use of copyrighted works by libraries and archives in a digital environment.
- Orphan works. Libraries continued to seek reasonable solutions for orphan works that would limit liability for copyright infringement of copyrighted works whose owners cannot be found despite a good-faith effort.
- The Prioritizing Resources and Organization for Intellectual Property (PRO-IP) Act of 2008. In mid-October, the president signed into law a controversial bill that amended copyright law and criminal code to dramatically raise penalties for copyright infringement and created a new, cabinet-level IP enforcement czar. Libraries opposed a section of the bill that allows a rights-holder to recover a separate award of statutory damages for each work contained in an infringed compilation (for example, a CD containing 10 tracks) as opposed to one award per compilation; librarians and others believe the provision will exacerbate the orphan works problem by increasing exposure to damages for using orphaned compilations.
- Public access to taxpayer-funded research. A sweeping, publisher-supported bill that would have banned public access measures similar to those of the National Institutes of Health was shelved in September after being introduced in the House. The bill would have amended copyright law and prohibited federal agencies from making funding agreements to require that works that result from federal support be made publicly available; it would effectively have overturned the current NIH Public Access Policy.

Legislators receive Valentine's Day cards (and messages)

On Valentine's Day, students and other library supporters sent "I Love My Teen Services Librarian" or "I Love My School Librarian" cards to their federal legislators, urging them to support the Strengthening Kids' Interest in Learning and Libraries (SKILLs) Act and the Library Services Technology Act. The former guarantees that all students in the United States will be served by state-certified library media specialists and will have the resources they need to succeed; the bill was first introduced in mid-2007. The latter is intended to help libraries of all kinds expand services and access to information resources for people of all ages.

FIRST AMENDMENT ISSUES

Supreme Court deals definitive blow to Child Online Protection Act

The U.S. Supreme Court in January 2009 rejected a government attempt to resurrect the Child Online Protection Act of 1998, which had been repeatedly rebuffed by lower federal courts during a decade of judicial review. The justices let stand a unanimous ruling from July 2008 by the Third Circuit Court of Appeals in Philadelphia declaring the law unconstitutional on First and Fifth Amendment grounds—which overturns COPA permanently.

The law sought to bar websites from posting commercial online communication that was deemed "harmful to minors" unless the site used an age-verification system to block viewers who are 17 or younger. It mandated a \$50,000-per-day fine and up to six months' incarceration for a website owner who posted a

"The government has no more right to censor the internet than it does books and magazines."

—Chris Hansen, ACLU

commercial online communication that include any such material, but it was never enforced due to an injunction granted in February 1999. The Supreme Court had sent the case back to lower court twice over the years.

“The government has no more right to censor the Internet than it does books and magazines,” Chris Hansen, senior staff attorney with the American Civil Liberties Union, remarked after the July 2008 ruling was handed down. During the string of legal proceedings, the ALA’s Freedom to Read Foundation filed several *amicus curiae* briefs on behalf of the plaintiffs.

Overturn of USA PATRIOT Act Gag Order Upheld, in Part

A federal appeals court ruled unanimously Dec. 15 that it is unconstitutional to prevent recipients of a National Security Letter from discussing its receipt unless disclosure might interfere with “an authorized investigation to protect against international terrorism or clandestine intelligence activities,” *American Libraries Online* reported. The decision in *Doe v. Mukasey* by the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals upheld a September 2007 district court ruling, although the appeals court narrowed the circumstances under which the FBI can enjoin providers of Internet access, including libraries, from revealing the receipt of an NSL demanding the email addresses and websites accessed by one or more users.

Appeals court Judge Jon O. Newman agreed with the lower court that a nondisclosure orders restrains the recipient “from publicly expressing a category of information, albeit a narrow one, and that information is relevant to intended criticism of a governmental activity.” However, the appeals court overturned a district court ruling that the FBI get court approval for every NSL before it is issued.

In March 2008, ALA and five other groups (the American Booksellers Association Foundation for Free Expression, the Association of American Publishers, the American Association of University Professors, the Freedom to Read Foundation, and PEN American Center) had filed an *amicus curiae* brief in the case that said that the NSL statute, even as revised by Congress, “chills protected speech.” pointing out that “even though the new Section 2709 purports to create an exemption for libraries, it does nothing of the sort for the vast majority of libraries.”

Book challenges just keep rollin’ along

The 27th annual Banned Books Week kicked off with the second annual Banned Books Week Read-Out!, held Sept. 27 in Chicago. ALA officials were joined by several acclaimed banned and challenged authors, including Judy Blume, Ron Koertge, and Stephen Chbosky, who discussed their experiences as targets of censors and read from one of their banned or challenged books. The event was hosted by the McCormick Freedom Museum, the Chicago Tribune, and ALA’s Office for Intellectual Freedom (OIF).

The Chicago event was echoed in libraries and bookstores nationwide. Banned Books Week, the only national celebration of the freedom to read, draws attention to the issue of censorship by mounting displays of challenged books and hosting a variety of events. More than 450 challenges were recorded in 2008, according to the OIF; in all, more than a thousand books have been challenged since the program’s inception, from those that explore current problems to classic works of American literature.

The OIF once again hosted Banned Books Week events in Second Life’s Banned Books Sky Platform, a permanent “town square in the air” dedicated to a continued celebration of banned or challenged books and to encouraging Second Life denizens to keep a vigilant watch against censorship. Events included debates on banned books and a fireworks display celebrating the freedom to read. The OIF also partnered with the American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression to launch and host a website (www.bannedbooksweek.org) that featured a list of dozens of Banned Books Week events at local public libraries and bookstores across the country.

The annual observance of Banned Books Week is sponsored by the OIF, the American Booksellers Association, the American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression, the Association of American Publishers, the American Society of Journalists and Authors, and the National Association of College Stores. It is endorsed by the Library of Congress's Center for the Book.

And Tango Makes Three makes it two in a row

For a second consecutive year, Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell's award-winning *And Tango Makes Three*, a children's book about two male penguins caring for an orphaned egg, topped the annual list of ALA's 10 Most Challenged Books. It was an eventful year for the penguin family. A few examples:

- In Ankeny, Iowa, a parent sought to ban the book from the school library, arguing that that the book "pushes the debate over a diverse, destructive and risky lifestyle, trying to pass it off as warm, fuzzy and normal through cute little penguins." The Ankeny school board denied the parent's request after the school board's attorney informed them that a decision to restrict the book would be difficult to defend in court.
- *Tango* returned to the general circulation shelves in the 16 elementary school libraries of Loudoun County public schools after Superintendent Edgar B. Hatrick, pressured by the school board, reversed his decision to remove the book from school libraries after a parent complained about its subject matter.
- An effort to ban *Tango* from the Chico (Calif.) Unified School District was defeated after a committee formed to review the book denied the challenge.
- The Calvert County (Md.) of Library Trustees also voted unanimously to keep *Tango* on its shelves after a parent complained that the book was about same-sex parents, and Library Director Patricia Hofmann went a step further and decided the book should remain in the children's section.

Protester gets to keep disputed book

City officials in Lewiston, Maine, won their case Aug. 27 against JoAn Karkos, who borrowed the public library's copy of *It's Perfectly Normal* in the summer of 2007 and refused to return it in order to keep it out of circulation. A district court ordered Karkos to return Robie H. Harris's youth sex-education book and pay a \$100 fine and threatened her with jail time if she did not comply within two days.

Karkos defied the order, but city officials decided not to pursue further action against her. "We feel there's little to be gained" by seeking imprisonment, library Director Rick Speer told *American Libraries*. "It would help her be a martyr and may bring public sentiment to her side." Also, a city press release noted, "The library now has four copies of the same book, all donated by others, instead of the one that existed." Karkos's right to use the public library has been suspended.

New Vermont law protects patrons' confidentiality

The Vermont Library Association and the Vermont School Library Association succeeded in getting a new state law enacted to protect the confidentiality of library patrons. Governor Jim Douglas signed "An Act Relating to the Confidentiality of Library Patron Records" into law on May 13; it took effect July 1. Previously, Vermont offered protection of library circulation records only through an exception to the open records law, but the new law affirmatively declares library patron registration and transaction records confidential. The new law covers all types of libraries.

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FEEDBACK AND CONTACT INFORMATION

The American Library Association's Public Information Office coordinated the preparation of this report with contributions from the following ALA units:

- ALA Library
- American Association of School Librarians
- American Libraries magazine, including AL Direct
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- Campaign for America's Libraries
- Chapter Relations Office
- Office for Diversity
- Office for Government Relations
- Office for Information Technology Policy
- Office for Intellectual Freedom
- Office for Literacy and Outreach Services
- Office for Research and Statistics
- Public Information Office
- Public Library Association
- Washington Office
- Young Adult Library Services Association

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