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Library customers like to play with Playaways

East Central Library Services (ECLS) was awarded a federal Library Services and Technology Act grant through the State Library of Iowa in 2007 for a Playaway demonstration project that proved to be popular with library customers.

ECLS purchased 155 Playaways, which are self-contained, battery operated audio books, along with batteries and earbuds. According to ECLS administrator Lily Lau, the Playaways were divided into six boxes of 25-26 each and loaned to 15 libraries for two months at a time. The units began circulating in April 2007 and are booked solid until July 2009. Currently there are 23 libraries in east central using them.

Each Playaway comes preloaded with best-selling books from leading publishers and comes packaged with earphones and a standard AAA battery for immediate listening.

Customers received user surveys with each Playaway and were asked to fill them out. More than 95 percent said they were easy to use; 98 percent said they liked the format; 96 percent said they would use them again, and 94 percent said they'd recommend that the library purchase them.

"A few had some issues with the battery door and the on/off button," said Lau, "but overall, most said the Playaways were very easy to use and they loved the format."

Some of the responses Lau received to the question of whether people like them included:

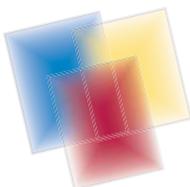
- "Very much! It has no scratches, unlike library audio books."
- "Yes. No skipping discs or tapes."
- "The format is more usable while doing everyday tasks."
- "I got lots of knitting done with this one!"

"Playaways cost around \$30 to \$100," said Lau. "I think this would be a nice county association project where the Playaways could be rotated and shared."

The Council Bluffs Public Library Foundation Board gave the library \$125,000 this year to begin a Playaway collection. Director Barb Peterson wrote a matching grant to the Iowa West Foundation and received it, as well as \$50,000 from the city for the project.

"With the \$300,000, we now have 260 titles in Playaway format and plan to continue adding to this collection," said Peterson. "We find that it is not just the young who are checking them out, but all ages. In fact, senior citizens seem to really like them, also. As fast as we could put them on the shelves, they were checked out."





Saving our forests, one piece of paper at a time



State Library staff have become more conscientious about their carbon footprint on the world. A quick survey of staff proved that changes in technology and mind set have combined to reduce the huge amount of paper used to do their jobs.

About 80 percent of interlibrary loans are sent electronically as either PDF and TIF files. Many reports that used to be submitted on paper are now done electronically.

An example is the annual survey. Librarians statewide used to receive a 25-page survey in the mail, including instructions. Direct State Aid reports and trustee surveys were each 2 pages each and mailed to libraries.

Public Library Management paper handouts have been cut by two-thirds, with most of the class information now online. Survey Monkey takes care of all State Library program evaluations. Class certificates are on the Web, along with the entire continuing education catalog.

Instructions like the Enrich Iowa FAQ (10 pages) do not have to be mailed, nor does the Enrich Iowa reports. The State Library's newsletter, Footnotes, used to be anywhere from 8 to 12 pages long and mailed to nearly 600 Iowa and national libraries.

Most librarians find the Iowalib mail list a godsend when the clock is ticking and information is needed immediately. It's nice to be able to communicate with other libraries about all sorts of topics and get feedback from many in a matter of minutes.

While a congratulatory letter or card will always be appreciated, the time, effort and trees saved communicating through technology is good for all of us...and our world.

Gerry Rowland retires after 21 years at SL

A retirement party for Gerry Rowland, State Library consultant, will take place around 2:30 p.m. Friday, June 20 in room 300, Miller Building (State Library), corner of E. 12th and Grand, Des Moines. The event will take place following the Iowa Commission of Libraries meeting.

Gerry was director of the Shenandoah Public Library from 1979 to 1986 and the Scott County Library from 1986-87 before taking the consultant's position at the State Library in 1987.

If anyone needed library statistics, Gerry was the go-to man. He remembers when statistics were gathered in paper format, calculated by hand and typed page by page. Now it's all done online, with calculations and tables configured in Access.

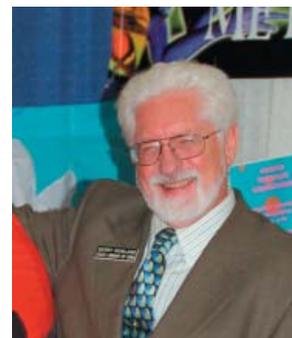
"Interlibrary loan was done by teletype at 20 large libraries, blind searching," said Gerry. "Now, of course, we have SILO and the Locator on the Web, with hundreds of libraries participating."

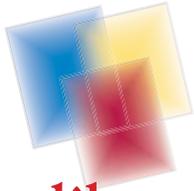
Gerry remembers how there were "guidelines" in 1979 rather than standards and "no one paid any attention to them."

"The guidelines became standards, which were approved by the Iowa Library Association membership," Gerry said. "Now, Direct State Aid is tied to the standards and there are 331 accredited libraries."

Asked what he intended to do after retirement, Gerry responded in the following order: "Paddle, work on river projects, chauffeur my wife to and from work, read, take photographs, be a library friend, and rest."

Good luck with the last one Gerry!





Iowa librarians tell the library story to legislators in Washington, DC

State Librarian Mary Wegner, Iowa Commission of Libraries member Tom Martin, Iowa Library Association (ILA) President Barbara Peterson and ILA Governmental Affairs Committee Chair Mike Dargan were in Washington DC May 13-14 to visit with Iowa's Congressional delegation about the importance of federal funding in providing Iowans with the best library service possible.

In particular, the library delegation explained how Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) funds support the Web-based information resource, EBSCO-host. They also explained how the State Library used the money, in cooperation with the Gates Foundation, to help libraries develop their own Web sites. LSTA funds make possible Iowa Center for the Book activities, the Summer Library Program, and building consulting grants. LSTA funds have also been used to help ILA with library leadership development training.

The contingency also expressed interest on improved broadband Internet, especially in rural areas, as well as language ensuring that school libraries would be included in legislation intended to upgrade school facilities.



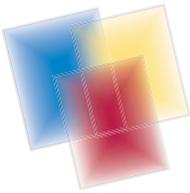
From left, Mike Dargan, Sen. Tom Harkin, Barbara Peterson, Mary Wegner and Tom Martin



From left, Tom Martin, Mike Dargan, Barbara Peterson and Mary Wegner near the Capitol



From left, Mary Wegner, Tom Martin, Barbara Peterson, Sen. Charles Grassley and Mike Dargan



Need help writing grants? Then don't miss the Iowa Grant Symposium in early September

Mark your calendars now to register beginning July 7 for the 2008 Iowa Grant Symposium, "Iowans Partnering for Progress," which will take place September 3-4, 2008 in the Scheman Building, Iowa State Center, Ames, IA. Registration will be available on the State Library's Continuing Education Catalog.

The agenda is filled with sessions relative to all grant seekers, networking opportunities and a full day of Grants Management topics offered by the U.S. Department of Labor. Highlights include:

September 3 - Concurrent Sessions

- Grants.gov: Find, Apply, Succeed
- Developing Local Resources/Approaching Potential Funders
- Logic Model - Beginning and Advanced Sessions
- Sustainability Planning: Moving to Continue Your Program
- Iowa Community Foundations
- Developing Grant Projects that Match the Mission of Your Organization
- Creating a Successful Budget
- Using Hard Data to Build Strong Proposals
- Evaluation Process
- A-133 Audits versus DOL's Common Findings
- Financial and Administrative Management

Networking reception

September 4 - Grant Management Sessions Offered by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL)

- A-133 Audits versus DOL's Common Findings
- Financial and Administrative Management
- Procurement
- Internal Controls versus Common Types of Public Corruption Fraud

These sessions will be offered consecutively

The registration fee to attend September 3 Concurrent Sessions and Networking Reception is \$100.

The fee to attend September 4 Grant Management Sessions is \$75.

The cost to attend both September 3 and 4 is \$130.

Fees include continental breakfast, lunch and breaks.

For more information, visit the State Library's Web site on July 7, or contact Kathy Mabie, 515-281-8834, e-mail kathy.mabie@iowa.gov.

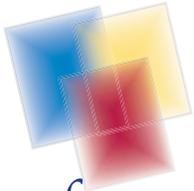
Certification Update

Congratulations to the following public library staff certified for the first time through the State Library's Iowa Certification Program for Public Librarians.

Sarah Bartlett, Coralville
Michelle Drenth, Hartley
John Gillette, Bettendorf
Karalee Jones, Johnston
Stephanie Keller, Clive
Rachel Lowry, Villisca

Ann Munn, Iowa City
Ross Petra, Ames
Angela Pilkington, Burlington
Mary Ann Stanger, Bettendorf
Patrice Strellner, Van Horne
Susan Winter, Hubbard





News from around the state

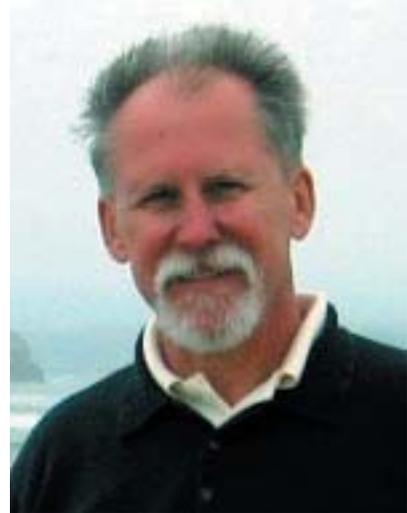
James Elmborg, PhD, associate professor and director, School of Library and Information Science, University of Iowa, Iowa City, is the 2008 recipient of the Reference Service Press Award for the article, "Libraries in the Contact Zone: On the Creation of Educational Space," which appeared in *Reference and User Services Quarterly (RUSQ)* vol. 46, no. 1. The award is presented by the Reference and User Services Association (RUSA), a division of the American Library Association (ALA).

The award, a plaque and \$2,500 donated by Reference Service Press, is given to the author of the most outstanding article published in *RUSQ*, the division's quarterly journal, during the preceding two volume years.

"This article was enthusiastically supported by all members of the jury because it was inspirational and built on the application of the social science construct of the 'contact zone,' known for promoting diversity and cultural differences in library services and practices," said Julia Gelfand, chair of the award committee.

"What a wonderful e-mail to get," Elmborg said. "I really like the article 'Libraries in the Contact Zone.' It took a long time to think through and write, and I'm so pleased to have it receive this kind of recognition."

The award will be presented at RUSA Awards Ceremony from 4 to 6 p.m. on June 30 during the ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim (Calif.).



Dayton Public Library Director Ruth Anderson recently learned that the library was awarded a Libri Foundation Grant. The library raised \$300 and the Libri Foundation will match two for one for a total of \$900 worth of children's books.

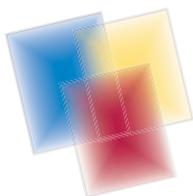
Said Anderson, "Sometimes there is not as much funding for children's books, and we can't always buy what we would like. Children are just like adults. They 'love' new books and being able to purchase them will stimulate their love of reading now into their adult lives."

The Libri Foundation is a nationwide non-profit organization which donates new, quality, hardcover children's books to small, rural public libraries in the United States through its "Books for Children" program.

State Library Consultant Marie Harms, back row, second from left, visited with librarians from Winneshiek County recently to discuss the possibility of a new statewide shared automation project.

Joining her are, front row left, Jude Zweibohmer, Ossian Public Library; Chris Bodensteiner, Fort Atkinson Public Library; back row left, Mark Ruen, Decorah Public Library; Harms; Linda Crossland, Calmar Public Library; and Lorraine Borowski, Decorah Public Library.





The following story was sent in by Lorna Caulkins, director of the Stewart Public Library in Grinnell, on behalf of Denise Lamphier, Emory's mother and wife of Charlie Clements.

"One of Emory's favorite characters is Thomas the Tank Engine. After seeing a big Thomas cake in a HyVee store, he decided he wanted that for his birthday. Unfortunately, his food allergies prohibited us from simply ordering the cake from HyVee. Also, Emory's dad is a perfectionist. He felt he could make a nicer one.

"The Wilton cake company no longer makes a Thomas cake pan. They make a generic train pan, but it certainly does not look like Thomas. Re-searching the internet yielded a couple of good Web sites for making marshmallow fondant (an edible playdough that could be used to make Thomas's face) and a good cake photo apparently made by a first time baker following instructions in a book called "Favorite Character Cakes" by Debbi Brown.

"Searching for a copy of the book to buy didn't go well. The book is out of print and was published in the UK. Two copies were found for sale. Amazon.com had a used one for \$115 and a used book store in London had a copy for \$65 (shipping not included).

"At this point being familiar with interlibrary loan, Dad visited a site called "Silo - Iowa's Card Catalog." He found a few libraries that had other books by the same author, but not the book he wanted. He then tried www.worldcat.org and located the book in the Brown County Library in Green Bay, WI. With that information he called the Ashwaubenon Branch Library's on-site supervisor, Anne Mead. She verified that she had the book on the shelf. He gave her all the information about the Grinnell Stewart Library. She took care of everything else. The book arrived 10 days later in plenty of time to make both a practice and a final cake."



Charlie and Emory Clements with Emory's birthday cake.

In the last issue of Footnotes, we failed to point out that the **Hospers Public Library** also passed the library levy. Congratulations!

The **Thornton Public Library** has added a fitness gym in its basement, making it a place where people can exercise both their minds and their bodies. The gym includes treadmills, exercise bikes, step machines, an elliptical machine, and free weights. There is no cost to use the gym. Library director Gloria Trevett said about 10 people use the exercise equipment every day, which she notes is a good turnout for a town of 242 people. The gym was previously a preschool, but it closed a few years ago. Local organizations pitched in to raise \$6,000 for the equipment, and some of the machines were donated.



The Des Moines Register (May 27, Pg. 6B) reported that **Betty Collins, Musser Public Library's children's librarian and Tina Miksch, teen librarian**, have promised to eat bugs if Muscatine children read 15,000 books in the library's "Go Buggy for Books" summer reading program. Pasta sprinkled with meal worms are one possibility. Suggestions are welcome, but the two have reserved the right to make the final meal choice.

Reminder:

The meeting minutes of the Iowa Commission of Libraries can be found at <http://www.statelibraryofiaowa.org/about/gov>