



# SEMLS Sightings

## April 2008

Southeastern Massachusetts Regional Library System  
Serving public, academic, school & special libraries in 86 communities in southeastern MA.

### Regional News

*Cindy Roach, Regional Administrator*

Three long-time public library directors, a long-time medical librarian and a school library teacher are retiring after many years of service to their communities.

Mary Jane Pillsbury, Director of the Wareham Free Library, has tendered her retirement papers. I met Mary Jane through her service to the Eastern Region Library System quite a few years ago. Mary Jane's leadership was evidenced then and is still evidenced by the library and staff of Wareham today; a staff dedicated to providing excellent service to the town of Wareham. The library has developed many partnerships with local agencies as a way to enhance their services. Community service and awareness are the cornerstones of the library. The last few years have been difficult for the library as it has had to fight hard for funding. The community it serves supported the library in this struggle. Kudos to Mary Jane for all her accomplishments! We know that the staff in place today will continue the legacy of service excellence that has been the hallmark of Wareham for so many years.

This June Annalee Bundy, Director of the Ames Free Library, Easton for the past 14 years, will also be leaving. Annalee has been a great library advocate and library leader. As director of the Somerville Public Library, Annalee implemented one of the first automated circulation systems in the state. After Somerville, Annalee moved on to direct the Providence Public Library. Annalee is leaving Easton as the library is completing major renovations. We look forward to seeing the completed library project sometime in the next year. Congratulations, Annalee, on your amazing career and thank you for all you have given to this profession.

Earlier this year, Ann Rust retired as the Director of the Dighton Public Library. Ann and her staff did marvelous work making the small and tight library quarters serve and meet the needs of all Dighton residents. There is space for researchers, readers, children and teens. Often, the tight quarters meant moving library programming outside to the nearby park. Ann and the board did submit a grant for library construction, and today Dighton is one of the libraries on the construction wait list.

In January, Linda Reilly, Library Teacher, Plymouth Community Intermediate School (PCIS,) retired. I first met Linda as the regions were beginning to form. Linda and Carol Schene were two of our very active school people.

Linda served on our executive board for four years and served as its first clerk. Linda was always there for you when you needed help and/or advice. She is someone that I counted on often. Linda, best of luck in whatever you do and thank you for all you did for us!

Lastly (but certainly not least,) I want to recognize Bonnie Hsu, Director of the Southcoast Medical Libraries for over 20 years who is retiring this month. Bonnie's enthusiasm for the service she supplies is contagious. Bonnie served on the SEMLS Executive Board and was a strong advocate for MassCat. Bonnie, warmest wishes to you!

### **Database Trials**

Within the next week, you will be hearing that we have set up trials for several science databases. We will keep the trials going through May and ask that you use these databases and tell us which ones are most useful for your needs. When the MBLC provided newspapers as a state-wide service, this freed up some funding that we used to purchase newspapers. This gave us the opportunity to look at adding a database for the first time in several years. When you receive notice about the databases,

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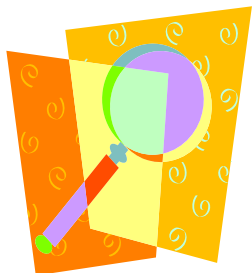
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## Genealogy Tools and Research Resources

Linda Beeler, Head of Reference, Thomas Crane Public Library



Our reference desk, like most of yours, is getting genealogy requests at an ever-increasing rate. Whether we work for a city like Quincy which spawned two presidents or a small town, we are still challenged with giving our patrons access to the records that will give them the thrill of seeing where – and whom – they came from. It's

so rewarding to be able to supplement our book resources with those fabulous online services where you can, as the patrons like to say, “just punch it in!” However, it helps to know where to punch. Here are some sources we use every day.

First, if you don't have the free RootsWeb Social Security Death Index <http://ssdi.rootsweb.ancestry.com/> at the top of your bookmarks, put it there now!

Most of our public libraries have at least a few of the *Massachusetts Vital Records to 1850* volumes that list birth, marriage, and death information as well as marriage intentions and baptismal and burial data — and have long been annoyed at how difficult they are to use. With a yearly \$150 institutional membership to the New England Historical and Genealogical Society, these become searchable online. Recently NEHGS added the *Massachusetts Vital Records 1841–1910* database. This is great because you can view the actual scanned documents. I was amazed to see, for example, my grandparents' marriage record including names, ages, and residences of the bride and groom, their places of birth, and their parents' names, as well as the date and place of marriage and the

name of the person who married them. Interestingly, you can get the basic births, deaths and marriages from this database for free at the Mass Archives [http://www.sec.state.ma.us/vitalrecords\\_search/VitalRecordsSearch.aspx](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/vitalrecords_search/VitalRecordsSearch.aspx) and then you can get more information by calling us to look at the actual scanned document from NEHGS.

A library membership to *Ancestry.com* is one of our best investments ever. We use it daily and so do our patrons. It has wonderful federal census information and lets you print out a blank form from each decade so that you can clearly read the headings. A hidden treasure is digitized images of Massachusetts city/town directories (years of coverage varies by town) which can be searched across all towns or browsed page by page. E-mail us if your library does not have *Ancestry.com* but you'd like to know which of your town's directories are covered. We have even printed out the whole directory for an older year that the library didn't own in hard copy.

*Footnote.com* is a resource recommended to us by a gentleman who presented a series of genealogy workshops. More than just a genealogy site, this fee-based but inexpensive service includes a growing number of digitized records from the vast holdings of the National Archive (after an interval of five years, all images digitized will be available at no charge through the National Archives Web site.) *Footnote.com* also offers social networking possibilities such as uploading your own historic images and creating “story pages” to share your own research and observations. We recommend signing up for a free trial and exploring the site for yourself!

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## Borrowing Materials for Patrons with a Visual, Physical or Reading Disability

Jim Jaquette, Interlibrary Loan Librarian, Thomas Crane Public Library

Several years ago your Interlibrary Loan Center began to keep track of items we borrowed by the type of format you requested. The vast majority of materials SEMLS libraries request fall into one of the following ten categories: books; books on tape; books on CD; music CD; DVD; kits; long-playing records; microfilm; scores and VHS. When something doesn't fit into one of these categories, we routinely shoehorn it into one of them anyway, justifying our action with a well thought-out, “well, it's close enough!”

Periodically we will get a request from a patron who is unable to read print materials due to a visual, physical or reading disability. Sometimes a patron is just “fishing,” hoping that a particular title they might have heard about is available in either Braille or the special 4-track cassettes created for the special player provided to the blind.

Often the individual is looking for something they already know has been published in these formats.

The institutions that own these materials are few and far between, but we have discovered that they are particularly generous. One of the most helpful is the Perkins School for the Blind Braille & Talking Book Library, <http://www.perkins.org/btbl/>. Established in 1835 by the Perkins School for the Blind, <http://www.perkins.org/>, it was one of the first libraries of its kind in the United States. The BTBL became affiliated with the Library of Congress's National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped in 1931. It's been around a long time, and it serves over 19,000 patrons every year. The Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and private donors provide support for

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this unique service.

The BTBL loans books in a wide variety of different subject areas for a population that spans all ages. Over 90 magazines on either cassette or Braille are also available. Check out the online catalog <http://www.klas.com/talkingbooks/massachusetts>. Newsline, an electronic system that allows users to listen to newspapers and magazines through synthetic voice output via a touchtone telephone, is also available. If your patron does not have the special cassette player, the BTBL can also provide that piece of equipment, too.

The BTBL offers services to both institutions and individuals. Individuals who meet one or more of the following eligibility guidelines can register with the BTBL to receive Braille and talking-book services. A patron must be legally blind with vision of 20/200 or less or has a visual field not greater than 20 degrees; is unable to see well enough to read with comfort for extended periods of time, even with correction; has a physical limitation that makes holding a book or turning pages difficult; is certified by a medical doctor as having a reading disability that has a physical basis; is legally blind with a profound hearing loss.

While your Quincy Interlibrary Loan Center can obtain items from the BTBL, many libraries with visually impaired patrons have found it more helpful to assist the patron in one of two ways. You can help your patron to become a registered user. All you need to do is download the Application for Library Service for Individuals: [http://www.perkins.org/assets/downloads/btbl/btbl\\_ind\\_application.pdf](http://www.perkins.org/assets/downloads/btbl/btbl_ind_application.pdf) or (request an application by calling 617-972-7240 or 800-852-3133) fill it out, and send it to the address on the form. It's free! Another way to take advantage of this wonderful service is to become a registered institutional user. Schools, libraries, hospitals, nursing and rehabilitation centers, day care programs and other agencies serving individuals who meet the guidelines above may apply and become eligible to borrow items for their visually impaired patrons. Again, all you have to do is fill out the Application for Library Services for Institutions, [http://www.perkins.org/assets/downloads/btbl/btbl\\_ind\\_application.pdf](http://www.perkins.org/assets/downloads/btbl/btbl_ind_application.pdf) and send it along, and like the individual membership, it's free!

There's a world of need out there, but there's also a world of resources to meet those needs! Let us know how we can help.



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## Upcoming Continuing Education Workshops

*Cheryl Bryan, Assistant Administrator  
for Consulting and Continuing Education*

### **Procurement: Must Live With It, Can't Live Without It!**

Are you ever not quite sure what is legal and what is not legal under the Mass Procurement Law? On May 13, from 10 a.m. to noon at SEMLS you'll have a chance to get an overview of statewide contracts including how they are developed, how to use them, and an online guide of how to locate state contracts using the Commonwealth's e-procurement system, Comm-PASS. Bring your questions and get answers from Pamela Brasill, Quality Outreach Coordinator for State Purchasing. Register online at the SEMLS Web site, or fax your registration form to 508-923-3539.

### **Adult Services Roundtable**

Want to meet your counterparts from other SEMLS libraries and find out what is working (and even not working) for them in delivering services in their libraries? Bring your best ideas to share and your quandaries to get perspective at the Adult Services Roundtable on May 28 from 10 a.m. to noon at SEMLS. Facilitated by Cheryl Bryan, SEMLS Assistant Administrator for Consulting and Continuing Education. Register at the SEMLS Web site or fax your registration form to 508-923-3539.

### **Libraries and the Massachusetts Memory Project**

Have you heard about the Mass Memories Road Show and wondered how your library might get involved? What is a Mass Memories Road Show? Come to the Brewster Ladies' Library on June 3 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. to find out. It's a collaborative program for sharing images that

reflect a community over time. The idea is that many organizations working together over time will create a portrait of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts based on images of everyday people living their lives. Administrators, adult services librarians, and archivists are invited to learn more about sponsoring an event to scan their community's photos and documents from Heather Cole and Joanne Riley from the Massachusetts Study Project from UMass Boston. Register online at <http://www.semls.org/> or by faxing your registration form to 508-923-3539.

### **Sustainable Workplaces: Maintaining a Healthy Worksite**

Are you concerned about the physical setting you or your employees are working in but are unsure of how to improve their workstations and the environment at your library? Ergonomics and air quality control may not have been part of your training, but they certainly affect your work. On April 29, from 10 a.m. to noon, at SEMLS, Heather Eustace from the Massachusetts Division of Occupational Safety will teach the elements of an indoor air quality investigation and review factors affecting air quality in libraries. She will focus on issues like mold and paper materials and asbestos containment. The ergonomics segment will address computer workstations and library tasks such as shelving. Register online at <http://www.semls.org/> or by faxing your registration form to 508-923-3539.

## SEMLS Dives into Online Learning

Kathy Lussier, Assistant Administrator for Technology



With rising gas prices and continued budget cuts, driving to SEMLS to attend a class can be difficult for staff at some libraries.

One way to overcome these obstacles is to offer online classes that staff can work on at their own convenience without traveling to the SEMLS office.

SEMLS has tried different models for online classes in the past. Linda Braun offered two sessions of a “Library Without Walls” several years ago, which included an initial face-to-face class where participants met each other and learned how to use the class blog and chat system.

The region has also offered Element K classes at various times to give staff an opportunity to learn Microsoft Office, Web development, and other software applications online. Although a few people have made the most of the Element K licenses, this online learning experience is unstructured, and we’ve found that many participants forget about the classes or don’t carve out the time necessary to complete them.

This past winter, SEMLS decided to test the waters of offering home-grown, online classes when I offered the Learning 2.0 @ SEMLS class. The class was based on the Learning 2.0 program created by the Public Library of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County.

The class gave SEMLS an opportunity to see if there was regional interest in online learning, if participation would hold steady in a structured environment, and if the learning experience would be as

rich as it is in a face-to-face class. If successful, the class could serve as a model for future online classes.

Most classes offered through the region are a one-time, three-hour workshop where participants learn about a particular topic or skill. It is then the responsibility of the student to go back to their libraries to decide how to incorporate what they learned into their services. Although we sometimes offer long-term classes, such as the readers’ advisory training, they are the exception rather than the rule.

The original Learning 2.0 class was an eight-week class that explored online services and technologies that are considered to be part of the Web 2.0 phenomena. Because library staff is accustomed to one-day workshops, we decided to cut back the length of the class to six weeks (with a one-week vacation in the middle) and dropped some of the exercises included in the original program. At the same time, we added a component on social networking sites. We estimated that participants would need to spend two to three hours per week on the class.

Fifteen people initially registered for the class, but one person cancelled immediately, and three never started the coursework. Eight participants completed all of the assignments. The remaining three completed some assignments, but didn’t stay until the end of the class. A couple of these people indicated in the post-course that they intend to finish the class at their own pace.

These numbers can be somewhat deceiving. I know of at least two cases where colleagues of participants shadowed the class even though they did not officially register. Since all of the course material

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### Creating a Successful E-learning Environment Reprinted from Web Junction

<http://data.webjunction.org/wj/documents/13139.pdf>

- Before starting your course, meet with your manager and determine how the training applies to your job. Set a learning goal to be met by the end of the course.
- Find out the technical requirements of the course and make sure you have the right software and hardware to support the course.
- When taking the course, forward your phone to voice mail and turn off your cell phone.
- Turn off e-mail notification and instant messaging.
- Tell everyone you are in training and cannot be disturbed. Post a note on your desk and let your coworkers know what time you will be available again.
- If there is an audio portion of the course, use a headset to focus your attention and decrease disruptions to those around you.
- Schedule time to study and make it a part of your every day.
- Participate in discussion boards and wikis that are related to the course you are studying.
- Discuss what you are learning with a mentor or a colleague who is an “expert” on the course topic.
- Invite your fellow coworkers to a brown-bag presentation and teach them what you have learned.
- Research and explore other resources (books, articles, and Web sites are good places to start.)

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is online, there is no way of knowing if there are others who used materials from the class.

Of the original registrants, nine were from public libraries, four from school libraries, one from an academic library, and one from a special library. Interestingly, all of the school librarians who registered for the class ultimately completed it despite the fact that they were the most limited by technology because filters blocked course Web sites. We often hear that school librarians have difficulty getting coverage to attend SEMLS workshops, and the results from this class indicate online learning may fit an important need for this group.

Participants were of varying skill levels. Some were new to all of the Web 2.0 tools covered in the class, which included blogs, wikis and podcasts. Others were already quite comfortable with some tools but wanted to learn about some new ones they hadn't explored before. As an instructor, I found the varying skill levels easier to work with in an online environment than in a face-to-face class. Each week, I could focus my attention on the participants who had a lot of questions. The more experienced users helped bolster my lessons by sharing real-life experiences and insights on the technology.

Nine participants completed the post-course survey for the class, seven of whom had finished the class and two of whom had completed a portion of the assignments. Those who did not finish the course said they found they were busy at work, and the course required a greater weekly time commitment than they expected. In fact, although I had estimated a two to three hour weekly commitment for the class, most survey respondents said they spent three to six hours (4), or more than six hours (3) on the class each week.

All respondents said they used personal time to complete some, if not all, of the class. The biggest barrier to completing the assignments at work was the fact that school filters blocked access to most of the Web sites covered in the class. A couple of people indicated their libraries had not set aside time for them to work on the class, while another said there wasn't enough time set aside to meet

the course requirements.

Throughout the survey, the busy life of the librarian was constantly cited as a factor that made it difficult to complete the work. The advantage of going to a face-to-face class at SEMLS is that you are given time to get away from work and focus on the class. With an online class, participants are often working on the class while also responding to the normal hustle and bustle of everyday library life. As staff members start taking more online classes, directors may want to consider ways they can try to replicate a learning environment in the workplace that frees the learner from as many distractions as possible.

Overall, the survey results indicate the class was a success. Many participants reported they have already integrated some Web 2.0 tools into their schools and libraries while others have plans to do so. All of the survey respondents said they would recommend the Learning 2.0 classes to others and would be willing to take another online class through SEMLS someday.

As an instructor, I found the length of the class made the class an even more enriching learning experience than most of my face-to-face, one-day workshops. The participants were able to make connections among the different tools from week to week, which is something that I have not seen happening when I teach the same topics as separate units.

I had been worried about helping participants troubleshoot problems from a distance, and there were times that it was difficult to help when I couldn't see their screens. However, there was a big benefit to the fact that participants had to figure out how to use the tools on their own. I think the learning is more likely to stick longer.

Now that our online learning experience is over, SEMLS staff will need to decide if we should offer more classes online and which classes will work best in this format. One thing is for sure – I will offer the Learning 2.0 class again in the fall, and I will work on the weekly time commitment to make it a little more manageable for participants.

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## Does Your Library IM?

*Kathy Lussier, Assistant Administrator for Technology*



Many of your library users are instant messaging. Are you? According to a July 2005 study from the Pew Internet and American Life Project, 75 percent of teens use instant messaging. For this group, e-mail is viewed as "something you use to talk to *old people*," while IM "has become the digital communication backbone of teens' daily lives." This report also found that in the overall population of Internet users, IM use had grown by 29 percent over the previous five years.

More recently, a December 2006 AP-AOL survey found that more than half of the adults surveyed log on to instant messaging every day. Nevertheless, few libraries

make themselves available to these users via IM.

Come to SEMLS at 10 a.m. on Wednesday, April 23, to learn how your library can use IM. In this class, we will explore how to use IM to interact with patrons and to foster staff communication. We will take a close look at Trillian, an instant messaging client that is installed on your computer, and Meebo, a Web-based instant messaging system. Both Trillian and Meebo interact with major instant messengers, such as AIM and Yahoo. We will also explore methods for promoting the library's screen name from its Web site. Sign up for this workshop on the SEMLS Web site at <http://www.semils.org>.



## Give Patrons the Opportunity to Calculate the Value of Library Services on Your Web Site

*Kathy Lussier, Assistant Administrator for Technology*

As budgets continue to tighten, it's never a bad idea to remind community members of the value they receive through library services.

To assist with library advocacy efforts, the Massachusetts Library Association developed a spreadsheet several years ago that libraries could use to calculate the dollar value of services provided to the community.

This library value calculator can easily be put on your

Web site so that each library user can calculate the individual dollar value they have received from library services. The original MLA calculator was adapted for the Web by Brian Herzog of the Chelmsford Public Library.

To see the calculator in action, go to the Chelmsford Public Library site at [http://www.chelmsfordlibrary.org/library\\_info/calculator.html](http://www.chelmsfordlibrary.org/library_info/calculator.html). To place the calculator on your own site, click on the "put this calculator on your Web site" link for instructions.

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## SEMLS Professional Collection is Moving

*Cindy Roach, Regional Administrator*



This spring the holdings of the professional collection are moving from SAILS to MassCat. Access to the holdings will be somewhat limited during May and June as this transition happens. If you need a title that you think we might have, call or e-mail Cheryl Letendre, [cleterdre@semls.org](mailto:cleterdre@semls.org), and she will be happy to check for you.

Now that MassCat is migrating to an ILS system, SEMLS can use it to provide access to the collection. MassCat is a catalog for schools and special libraries that are not af-

filiated with the automated networks. The move is strictly financial. SEMLS has a very small collection – roughly 600 bibliographic records and 400 patrons. SAILS offers its members many more services than we need or use, so financially this makes sense for SEMLS. We will be issuing new MassCat cards to all members over the summer and into early fall. If you have any questions, please contact me, [croach@semls.org](mailto:croach@semls.org).



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## Out With the Old...in With the New

*Vickie Beene-Beavers, Assistant Administrator for Youth Services*

Ah...spring. It's that time of year again when we plan to manage the de-cluttering of the home, office and vehicle. As with every year, I have dutifully filed away the mountain of clutter into well-labeled hierarchies in my mind way before I physically lift a hand. My cleaning plan is so simple that when I finally act upon it, I, of course, set another day to implement this "kamikaze, molly maid" master plan. So what do I do? Procrastinate and drown in both clutter and ideas. I've heard and read the wisdom of the professional organizers that one should habitually yet gradually "clean as you go" by starting on much smaller tasks. I have to admit it does work, when I take the time to do so. But I find that I often beat myself up for not following a more formal plan of cleaning. Usually it's inspired by events or even lack of space. So as I make room for

items and ideas, it's only natural that I should toss out the old or at least find another use for it.

But I can't totally toss out things I haven't touched in years. I'm a librarian—which could be viewed among other professionals as a borderline hoarder. We always find another use for something. (In library speak that means creating a new display or creating separate collections and shelving to increase visibility.)

Many people would like public libraries to jump into the use of new technologies as if they are organizing a room that hasn't been cleaned in 20 years. While jumping head-on into the shifting clutter isn't something I customarily do, whether it's MySpace, Facebook, Youtube,

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LiveJournal and other popular Web 2.0 tools, I can become overwhelmed with the thought of tackling the idea of investigating what's at the bottom of that clutter let alone finding and attaching a new use of library services using these new technologies. But there are those moments when I feel inspired to do just that—streamline my clutter. That means surveying the area both mentally and physically to see how and where these new technologies can be applied to your cleared space. Just as I look for examples on TV, print or radio for tips on maximizing space, I try to align myself with advice that sometimes stretches my boundaries. In the library world, we call it Best Practices, and on a local level, conferences and yes, even roundtables. You've seen the magazines, *SLJ*, *VOYA*, *American Libraries*, etc. which periodically feature libraries and/or librarians who have moved things around a bit at their institutions to make room for services—or at least wipe the dust off existing ideas to find another current use for it. That's what I and my colleagues here at SEMLS aspire to do when we offer workshops that attempt to shift the function and placement of 'clutter.' We would like to think that we are here to offer a broom or perhaps a blueprint for you to build another addition to your building if one is adamant on storing the same clutter because it's something that the library is customarily known for.

We librarians have to be mindful that not everyone can navigate through the clutter of our homes. As we move to the world of enhancing one's experience in customer service settings, we're noticing that people are moving on to better perhaps, well-lit, allergy-free homes. Rooms that are easier to navigate—and for a growing generation now denoted by letters of the alphabet, much more suited for individual comfort and familiarity. So the obvious marketing question we ask ourselves is what will bring both old and newly registered taxpayers to our spaces in the coming years? "I certainly cannot abandon my organized, partitioned piles of clutter. Furthermore one man's trash is another man's treasure," as our fellow borderline hoarders cry out. There's no need to abandon everything I say. But perhaps we can peel back the layers to find out if there is another manner for its use. (Besides one never truly knows how valuable a cherished item is until you bring it to PBS's *Antique Roadshow*.) Certainly many of our items have sentimental value that can't be priced, but when such items or ideas get in the way of streamlining our clutter, do we really want to insure it when it has lost its value, or do we even want to expend staff time for items that require more work in its preservation than implementation? Surely some of the latest online tools can help in streamlining the process.

If you are feeling inspired to area clean, I would recommend that we put into practice the habit of using these new technologies among staff members first. I mean, haven't they worked in the clutter for several seasons?

Shouldn't they take part in helping to clean to make way for a new idea, a new "antique?" I would recommend that such cleaning should be done gradually because any major disturbance will certainly cause the household to sneeze when the dust begins to fly.

When the opportunity presents itself, share your experience or cleaning tips with others in workshops, newsletters and conferences. Cleaning, though sometimes a solitary act, can inspire others to do the same. We've seen such garage sale-like announcements in the form of new services and programs. Technologically speaking, Seekonk Public Library provided a great example of a new use of an old tool with their practice of offering year-round, online family program registration with their ReadsInMA.org campaign—our statewide, three-year grant funded by the MBLC. Not only did Seekonk promote their summer reading program last summer but they offered an online fall reading campaign. SPL elected to free up space for its users to move around their library home with less physical confinements. Like Seekonk, 23 libraries in our region alone last year elected to shake up the dust balls a little to greet new and old visitors for their summer stay. We hope that our guests enjoyed this unassuming virtual room—statewide they seem to appreciate the area dusting. Last year nearly 18,000 people enrolled online in the first year of the ReadsInMA.org program. Viewing the stats through regional reading glasses, this figure was deemed to be a success. As we are heading into another season of spring cleaning, libraries will have another opportunity to dust off their traditional summer program offering by joining the 'professionals,' those librarians who have not only envisioned a clutter-free room but have 'technologically' actually moved mountains of antiquated ideas and services to make them more accessible and relevant to today's library users.

Sign up today to attend an upcoming ReadsInMA Summer Program Training.

Tuesday, April 22, SEMLS, 2-4:30 p.m.

Thursday, May 15, Wellfleet Public Library, 11-1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 20, SEMLS, 10-12:30 p.m.

Wednesday, June 4, SEMLS, 2-4:30 p.m.

### ***Got Books at My Own Cafe?***

Calling all bibliophiles of teen lit! This summer we are looking for a few good titles as we prepare a list of great teen reads on My Own Cafe. This summer we will promote X-pect the Unexpected, our teen theme on My Own Cafe. Your posts, directed to 13-18 years old teens, will help promote our Wild Reads season. If you are interested in participating, please contact [vbene-beavers@semls.org](mailto:vbene-beavers@semls.org), and save the date for the Thursday, June 5, My Own Cafe Roundtable held at the SEMLS office.



**Spring 2008 Delivery  
Survey Results**  
*Carolyn Pettiford, Office Manager*

The Spring 2008 delivery survey has been compiled. There were 161 public libraries, branches, academics, special libraries, school libraries, three networks and the regional office that took the time to report what was happening in their libraries for the week of this survey. We had 98.71% participation from our members on delivery. The results of this delivery survey will also be made available to the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners who directs these delivery surveys be conducted twice a year.

Spring 2008 Delivery Survey	<b>68,199</b>	Spring 2008 Bins Used	<b>2,416</b>
Fall 2007 Delivery Survey	62,452	Fall 2007 Bins Used	2,252
Items increased <b>8.42%</b>	5,747	Bins Used increased <b>6.8%</b>	164

Annualized, this translates into 3,396,926 items sent through delivery. (The amount is calculated by adding the Fall 2007 Delivery Survey items (62,452) and the current Spring 2008 Delivery Survey items (68,199) and then multiplying the total by 26 weeks.) The busiest days for delivery continue to be Tuesday (12,067) and Wednesday (10,747.) As far as the sort of items, on average per day there are 11,367 items handled. Also to be noted is that 52% of those on delivery package their fragile items. This report is due to all of your hard work. Thank you!

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**Libraries With the Highest Volume**

	<b>2008 Spring Survey</b>	<b>2007 Fall Survey</b>
Thomas Crane Public Library (Quincy)	<b>2,267</b>	2,735
Hingham Public Library	<b>1,834</b>	1,919
Attleboro Public Library	<b>1,803</b>	1,595
Falmouth Public Library	<b>1,734</b>	1,276
New Bedford Free Public Library	<b>1,730</b>	1,433
Weymouth Libraries	<b>1,533</b>	1,363
Plymouth Public Library	<b>1,532</b>	1,469
Dartmouth Public Libraries	<b>1,288</b>	1,133
Thayer Public Library (Braintree)	<b>1,341</b>	1,186
Brockton Public Library	<b>1,241</b>	1,172
Mansfield Public Library	<b>1,149</b>	961
Boyden Library (Foxboro)	<b>1,104</b>	920
Sharon Public Library	<b>1,062</b>	1,008
Sandwich Public Library	<b>1,043</b>	772
Ventress Memorial Library (Marshfield)	<b>1,023</b>	948

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**Network Distribution of Items**

<b>CLAMS Network</b>	<b>23.69%</b>
<b>OCLN Network</b>	<b>33.22%</b>
<b>SAILS Network</b>	<b>40.57%</b>



**Teaching Thinking Skills With Children's Books**  
*Vickie Beene-Beavers, Assistant Administrator for Youth Services*

Storyboarding...Reader's Theater...Circle Stories are just the few methods for which to engage children of all reading levels and interests in your public library or school media program. These creative activities can help generate excitement for a reluctant reader to enhancing comprehension among advanced readers. You're invited to

explore how you can help build strong vocabulary, build critical thinking skills and encourage independent learning by integrating picture and non-fiction books for reading pleasure and research for children both in and out of the classroom. This month, we invite Nancy Polette, former

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St. Louis County, MO school teacher and media specialist, to offer literature-based learning programs and ideas for both gifted and reluctant readers. Ms. Polette, author of over 150 professional books and guides for the classroom, is anxious to share some of her strategies that work well for both school and public library settings. While Mrs. Polette encourages creativity in the classroom amid the atmosphere of testing, a few school librarians have implemented creative strategies to entice readers to learn through action and play. Elena Schuck, Station Avenue Elementary School's Media Specialist, knows just how successful imagination in the classroom is because it presents itself as an opportunity for her to support everyone's learning styles.

"To act or not to act that is the question..."

As drama plays a role (no pun intended) in our Massachusetts Frameworks, I enjoy teaching it to my K through third grade students using reader's theater. I rewrite a few favorite books, The Mitten, Polar Bear, Polar

Bear, any book that you, as an educator, enjoy. I select books that coincide with curriculum frameworks. By changing the book and retelling the story, I demonstrate how folktales change as they are told over many years (I also don't have to worry about stepping on those big copyright toes!) Using manipulatives works well for my energetic students. I usually give my kindergarten students pictures, with their characters, to hold up when they speak their lines. Asking struggling readers to read together as a group helps foster confidence. Plays are a great practice for reading aloud, and who does not like pretending once and a while?"

If you would like to learn how other classroom activities translate into a public library setting with Nancy Polette, a 2006 Legacy Award winner, join us April 24 at the Wareham Free Library for a workshop that stretches the minds of librarians—and children alike.



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## A My Own Cafe Contest Benefiting Teens and Their Libraries

*Vickie Beene-Beavers, Assistant Administrator for Youth Services*

Get ready to share with your teens an opportunity for them to win cool prizes this summer. Starting May 1-June 15, the library with the highest number of newly registered teens will win a digital camera. Yes, that's right! YOUR library could receive a digital camera to take those precious and hilarious program photos.

Any teen who posts to the new creativity center during the contest period will be entered to win one of seven possible cool prizes. Gift cards ranging from \$15-50 values from such cool electronic and Internet stores may include

Circuit City, Best Buy, Game Stop and/or Newbury Comics.

In a few more weeks, we will upload new flyers and contest guidelines to the My Own Cafe library administration section for you to read, share and pass on. In the meantime, enjoy your planned program of summer reading activities as scheduled for we are expecting great MOC developments and announcements in the months to come. This is only the beginning of fun!

### Regional Reference Centers

**Falmouth Public Library**  
300 Main Street  
Falmouth, MA 02450  
Phone: 888-439-8850

[falmouthreference@falmouthpubliclibrary.org](mailto:falmouthreference@falmouthpubliclibrary.org)

**Thomas Crane Public Library**  
40 Washington Street  
Quincy, MA 02169-9164  
Phone: 617-376-1316 or 800-559-7336  
[quref@ocln.org](mailto:quref@ocln.org)

### Member Updates

#### Best Wishes in Your New Position

*Kathy Dubrovsky, Library Coordinator  
Sharon Public Schools*

*Mary Dunphy, Library Teacher, Hull High School*

*Amy Ryan, Director, Vineyard Haven Public Library*

*Alma Ramos-McDermott, Library Teacher  
Plymouth Community Intermediate School*

#### Best Wishes to Our Newest Member

*Gilmore Academy IRC  
150 Clinton Street  
Brockton, MA 02302*

*Nancy James, Library Teacher*