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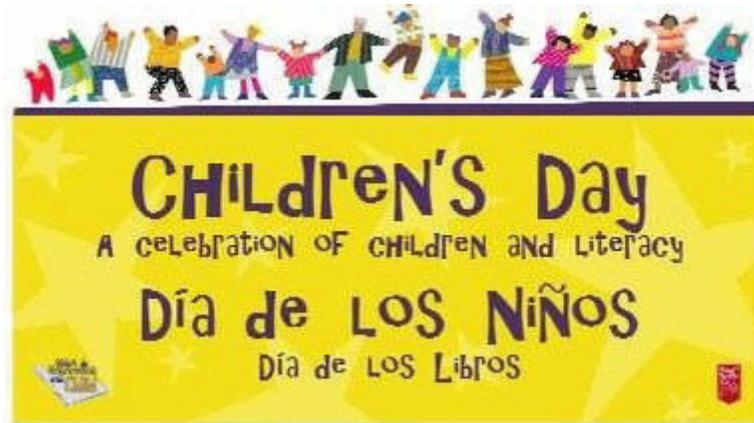
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Welcome

There is still time to register your **El Día de los Niños** event (held on or around April 30) and be eligible to receive a colorful banner. Go to:

www.lili.org/surveys/ninos.htm.



Here's another announcement we wanted to make sure you saw:

You are invited to join other members of the Idaho library community in an exciting new venture. One of the four statewide strategies to come out of the 2020 Vision process was: “Create a Special Projects Library Action Team (SPLAT) to act in the ‘crows nest’ capacity, searching for innovation, proposing and leading experiments and pilot projects, discovering new opportunities.” The time has come to launch the team!

SPLAT members pledge to **build** their own expertise in innovative practices; **share** their expertise and experiences with their colleagues in the Idaho library community; **use** their expertise with library customers in their community on a regular basis; and **work** to make the 2020 Vision a reality in Idaho.

Why You?

We want you because you fit the following criteria...

- You have a strong desire to participate in creating the future of Idaho libraries,
- You have an ability to think long-term, even a passion for forward thinking,
- You love to learn, and
- You can commit to the whole process, including:
 - Serve a three-year term on the team (some team members will start to rotate off after two years)
 - Participate in quarterly meetings. The first meeting has already been scheduled around the July 11-13 Technology Conference featuring Steve Abram in the Boise area. SPLAT will meet the day after the conference in a retreat atmosphere. SPLAT members will be reimbursed for travel expenses. Some meetings may take place via conference call or in a web-based format.
 - Post and respond to the SPLAT blog at least two to four times a month. SPLAT members will also take responsibility for continually reading support materials and keeping up with future trends in order to act in the

'crows nest' capacity. This could take five to ten hours a month outside of blogging and meeting time.

The size of SPLAT is limited to 8 – 12 members. To apply, complete the online form located at www.lili.org/futures/splat-app.htm by **May 26th**.

Selections will be made by the SPLAT Design Team (Joe Reiss, Glenna Rhodes, Dylan Baker, Memo Cordova, & Stephanie Bailey-White). The Design Team will also be considering geographic representation, involvement of different types and size of libraries, and involving people in different stages of their library career.

Selections will be announced by June 12.

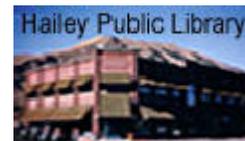
If you have questions call or e-mail Stephanie at 208-334-2150 or 1-800-458-3271 or another member of the SPLAT Design Team (see above).



Meet LeAnn Gelskey

LeAnn Gelskey is the young children's librarian at the Hailey Public Library, a job she shares with Jeanie Johnston. LeAnn started out in circulation at the library almost five years ago and was promoted to her current position three years ago. Although she was somewhat hesitant about doing the job, she really enjoys working with the children and all that comes with that. She thinks her love of libraries was instilled by the staff at the Hailey Public Library when she attended storyhours in the original location as a child. "Mrs. Donnelly did all the storyhours. She was a lifelong teacher and everyone in this area remembers her. And then I would stay after storyhour and help Alba Arndt, the only staff member, shelf books. We still have a chair that the Friends donated in honor of Alba's work here. I think that got me started in my library career!"

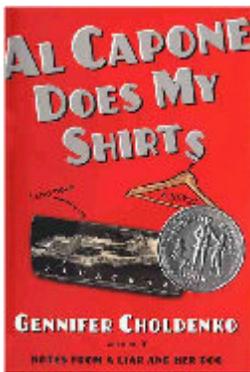
Hailey is the county seat of Blaine County and sits 11 miles south of the resort communities of Ketchum/Sun Valley where the world famous Sun Valley ski resort is located. Although the library is a city library, they serve many of the county's residents. The library defines itself as a popular fiction library and tries to keep patrons up to date with their favorite writers and bring to their attention some of the new and upcoming writers. (To learn more about the library, visit www.haileypubliclibrary.org/.) LeAnn says the library really does try to make sure they get the latest and greatest selection of new titles. She's been working with Jeannie to expand the library's bilingual collection and continually weed and build their nonfiction materials.



LeAnn does a weekly storyhour program for young children and is currently putting together programs that will coordinate with the "Key Ingredients"

Smithsonian display they will be hosting this summer. "Picnics" and "Yucky Food" are two storyhour themes she recently developed, and putting together themed programs is one of her favorite parts of the job. "I like all the creative parts." She said the library tries to use themes that everyone -- kids, teen and adults -- can take part in. LeAnn is also in the middle of planning another big El Día de los Niños event. They partner with the Blaine County Sheriff's Office (which is handy since her husband works there and helps with the program!) and this year they will be doing a special El Día program at the Head Start location since budget cuts have curtailed field trips the kids can take. She's also working on plans for the summer reading program, including trying to simplify the process. "We're trying to not have so much paperwork and see if we can make it more fun for our staff," she said.

Since she only works 14 hours a week and has to devote some of that time to working at the circulation desk, finding the time to do everything she wants to do is a big challenge. Her colleague Jeanie works 20 hours, but also has to spend about 10 of those on the circ desk. Another challenge LeAnn mentioned was gaining access to partnership opportunities. "Even though we're a growing community, we're still rural and gaining access to places to help promote what we're doing is hard. That partner base is lacking," she said.



LeAnn just finished reading *Al Capone Does My Shirts*, "a great read," she says. All time favorites include the Curious George books and *Great Expectations*. "And I love *If You Give a Mouse a Cookie*, by Laura Numeroff." She also enjoys authors Tracy Chevalier and Elizabeth Berg.

LeAnn says her 14-year-old son helps her keep up with current books for young adults and her nine-year-old daughter isn't far behind. "She always wants to read what everyone else in the family is reading." In addition to spending time with her family and reading, she likes to go camping and fishing and enjoys shopping and eating (as long as she doesn't have to cook or clean!).

Thanks, LeAnn! We enjoyed hearing more about what you're up to!



Library to Library

Guys Night Out a HUGE Success at the Meridian District Library!

Over 250 guys (men and boys) showed up at the Meridian District Library last Thursday night for Guys Read Night. The library usually gets large numbers of attendees at events, but this one was even bigger than staff had hoped for. Youth Services Director Jillian Subach said the library is "still in happy shock" about the night. "This was a monumental night for boys and

their dads. I sat outside and cried, watching all the men pull up in their pick-ups and unload their boys!" Jillian said.

A great article by Emily Simnitt that appeared on the front page of Sunday's Life section in the *Idaho Statesman* helped publicize the event. Simnitt wrote, "Part of the Meridian library will become a girl-free zone Thursday as the mostly female corps of librarians hand the reigns over to the guys for a Guys Night Out. That means Greg Likins, a guy who works at the library, will take charge from youth services librarian Jillian Subach for the evening, and there won't be a single princess in any of the books promoted at the event. Instead, expect books about mummies and zombies and 'anything dealing with poop,' Likens said."

Jillian got the idea for the night out from children's author Jon Scieszka's Guys Read Project (see www.guysread.com for more information). She worked with the Meridian Kiwanis Daybreakers Club to sponsor the event. Jillian said the Kiwanis wants to pay every year, "which is wonderful, because we included dinner and that wasn't cheap! But the food helped, especially since guys were getting off work – they were hungry, and the moms could take the night off of cooking."

Jillian rounded up great speakers, jugglers and a magician and got free miniature golf passes for every boy under 18 from Boondocks. "Our male librarians were present, to emcee the night, keep the pizza and drinks flowing, and keep the kids organized. We had 45 extra-large pizzas delivered, and not one piece left!" Check out the stack of pizza boxes in the photo at the right! "Howard Little, one of our male Board of Trustee members, worked all night along with the guy librarians," Jillian said. "Kudos to him for such service. And what a way for him to see first-hand what it takes to present such a big program and to see how important these things are for our community."



Speakers included Senator David Langhorst (D. Garden City) who shared stories about his life growing up, and showed outdoor and automotive magazines to the boys. He also read a poem by Scieszka and Silverstein. Bill Driscoll, the President of the Meridian Kiwanis Daybreakers, read a short story. Junior Jugglers (teen jugglers) inspired boys to read about juggling (see photo above). "They did a great show and were the performance hit of the evening!" Jillian said. A magician taught the boys tricks, and a police/dog team came in and spoke to the boys as well. Coloring sheets for younger boys with pictures of snowboarding, race cars, etc, and crayons were on the tables to keep them occupied.



All the planning was worth it for the staff at Meridian. Jillian says, "I have never seen anything so inspirational as this, and I've created many programs over the years. We had such interest from the men and boys. We

collected names and e-mails of men interested in continuing the momentum. I met with John Scieszka while in Boston for PLA, and got him to agree to interview for the *Statesman*, and he's totally supportive of our efforts here in Idaho. I would suggest that people check out the www.guysread.org website and forge ahead!

Let's capitalize on that, and start seeing such events everywhere."



How do busy librarians make time to take their services into the community and reach underserved families?

This question was the focus of the 2006 Read to Me meeting, which brought together 49 librarians from 32 libraries in February at the Garden City Public Library.

Invited librarians came together for two days to discuss their outreach services, hear about innovative projects and share tips and resources to strengthen their services. They heard presentations on outreach to special populations, early literacy skills and resources, emerging trends in library services, time management, advocacy, and hands-on family literacy activities. Both first-time attendees and participants who have attended in prior years found the two-day event to be very useful. At the end of the second day, they were asked to share how they could use this information for day to day responsibilities and what new activities they were inspired to take on.

Their responses included:

- Do more outreach to day care centers
- Do more advocacy, including getting trustees and "Friends" more involved in promoting library services to community service clubs and businesses
- Convene a steering committee to support summer reading programs
- Find groups to reach in outreach programs and find new community partners
- Contact the radio station to run PSAs
- Beef up our Spanish and bilingual children's collection
- Implement bilingual programs
- Participate in Read to Me outreach projects: First Book, Child Care Reads, Jump Start kindergarten outreach, and summer reading outreach



Photo at the beginning shows Sharon Kae Kimber, DeMary Public Library; Peggy Smith, Coeur d'Alene Public Library; Diane Matejka, Garden City Public Library; and Louise Nofziger, Buhl Public Library. The photo above and to the right shows Heidi Arzola, Portneuf District Library, sharing with the group how her library has expanded their summer reading outreach.



NexGen YS: The Need for Feeds

By Dylan Baker

For a profession dedicated to sorting, searching and sifting through information, most of us are either drowning in it or just barely treading water. E-mails from colleagues, listservs and newsletters (such as this one) appear in our inboxes almost faster than we can delete them. New library blogs spring up by the dozens every day, blooming full of innovative ideas to consider and interesting links to click on. Even outside of the digital realm, trusty library journals keep appearing in our mailboxes, waiting for us to absorb their content.

Maybe the information overload makes you want to shut your eyes, clamp your hands over your ears, and wish it all away. But can you really call yourself an information professional if your only answer is to ignore it? Closing yourself off to the evolving conversation about libraries will merely leave you mired in the past. There isn't much hope for an obsolete librarian in this frantic, fast-paced Information Age.

Open your eyes and ears, because there are ways to harness this abundance of information. Web feeds (in either RSS or Atom) let you “subscribe” to a variety of blogs and other online news sources that you can read in a single place. Think of them as your own personalized newspaper, filled with the articles and columnists that you want to read, without the chaff.

Two popular ways to get your web feeds delivered include using Mozilla Firefox as your web browser or by signing up for the free Google Reader online. Each method lends itself to different reading styles and personal habits, depending on where and how you want to access your feeds.

Firefox (see “[Igniting the Web](#)” in *Volume 2, Number 2 of The Scoop*) is a free web browser alternative to Internet Explorer, which offers an integrated way to handle web feeds. If you're comfortable with favorites or bookmarks, you can easily use Firefox's “Live Bookmarks” to subscribe to web feeds. An orange icon will appear in the address bar for any website that offers a web feed – clicking on it will add a “Live Bookmark” for that site's feed, which you can check for updates alongside your other bookmarks.

Firefox is a great start, but if you frequently use multiple computers or if you need more web feed reading power, look to Google Reader (reader.google.com). After you register for a free Google Account, you can use Google Reader to keep an eye on all of your web feeds from any Internet-connected computer. Google Reader also allows you to “star” feed items, letting you share your favorite bits with others in a new feed all your own.

Here is a short list of web feeds to get you started, though you're bound to find a lot more once you discover the need for feeds:

- [Dylan's Starred Items](#) (my picks from all the library feeds I read)
- [Idaho State Library Blog](#)
- [Library Link of the Day](#)
- [LISNews.org](#)
- [Tame the Web: Libraries and Technology](#)
- [Unshelved Comic](#)

Take charge of the glut of information, capturing only what you want and how you want it, by harnessing web feeds. The short amount of time you'll invest in setting up subscriptions will yield great dividends for your ability to make sense of information in the long run. In this sink-or-swim Information Age, web feeds are one powerful way to keep up with it all.



***Talk Back:** Dylan welcomes your feedback. Just e-mail [Peggy](#) or [Stephanie](#) and we'll print your comments in *The Scoop*.*



Young Adult Corner

If you had in your collection a library material that assisted poor readers, built vocabulary and even helped teens read above grade level, would you want to promote it? You may be surprised to learn the above mentioned characteristics are part of the appeal of **comic books**. Yes, comic books. Still not convinced? Michael R. Lavin of the Lockwood

Memorial Library at the University of Buffalo, The State University of New York, in Buffalo, NY has a great web site that covers the benefits and concerns about comic books in the library, including parents' objections, inappropriate content, theft and labeling comic books as "junk literature." Visit the web site at: <http://ublib.buffalo.edu/lml/comics/pages/> for more information.

And here's some timely news, **Free Comic Book Day is coming up on May 6**. It is a day where people can go to their local comic book store and receive a free comic. This event is intended to spread the readership of comics and help promote the art form. Check this web site www.freecomickbookday.com/ for more information and a list of comic book stores in your area who are participating. They may be willing to work with libraries. Any other programming that could surround the day would also be fun. Comic book trading events, graphic novel book discussion groups, or displays would be fun to pull together. The web site also has the history of comic books and other facts you could pull for a display or event.



Observations from an attendee at the ILA Southwest Regional Conference

As one of those “old people” attending the Teen Viewpoints Panel Discussion at the recent Southwestern Idaho Library Association Regional Conference, I was surprised to learn that the majority of the panel member’s favorite genre is fantasy. On the other hand, as a definite “digital immigrant,” I was pleased to hear that these “digital natives” still view their library as a PLACE to visit in person where they meet their friends and check out books and participate in programs.

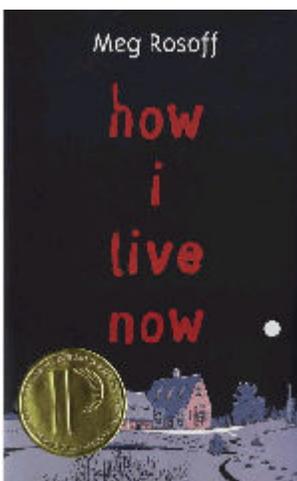
If the students on the panel were made library king or queen for a day, their requests included libraries adding coffee and more comfortable furniture.

Most of the teens noted that for them “classics” are books that “never get old” and they “find something new every time they read it.” As one of the “old people,” I hope they will give some of the books they found boring such as *To Kill a Mockingbird* a second chance in a few years.

The Young Readers Choice Awards for 2007 reflect the interest that young people have in fantasy. In all three age divisions a good number are from this genre. For example, the Junior Division offers up *Dragon Rider* and *Peter and the Starcatchers*. For the 7th-9th grade readers, there are also a number of fantasy nominees. This category includes some family stories which deal with loss and family strength such as *Red Kayak* and *Teacher’s Funeral*, a light-hearted look at the good and bad times of life in a turn of the 20th century Indiana farming community. The interest in fantasy continues in the Senior Division with *Airborne* which tells the story of a boy born and raised on an airship. But the nominees also include one which will get the discussion going titled *My Sister’s Keeper*. It relates the story of Anna whose sole purpose seems to be to provide healthy marrow and tissue to keep her older sister Kate alive. Told from various viewpoints, this book grapples with the complicated world of a family dealing with cancer.

Observations by Karen Sayko, Idaho State Library Office Specialist 1, (and one of the “old people”!)

If you have an idea for the Young Adult Corner, send a quick e-mail to [Stephanie](#) and we'll share all ideas in *The Scoop!*



Book Look

Love Battles War in Meg Rosoff’s *how i live now*

Reviewed by Suzanne Davis



Meg Rosoff’s *how i live now* explores survival and love in a world torn apart by war. Although terrorist threats are common and war seems imminent, Daisy’s father and his pregnant wife “Davida the Diabolical” have dumped the 15-

year-old anorexic teen on her cousins so they can, in Daisy's words, "move forward with their lives." She is cautious and guarded; however, when unnamed terrorist enemies occupy Great Britain, Daisy opens herself to the love and acceptance of her younger cousins. Daisy states, "Without anyone making a big deal of it [...] Piper and Edmond and Isaac and I started doing pretty much everything together" (21-22). Aunt Penn is stranded in Oslo, and when the military discovers their lack of adult supervision, officers seize their home and split the children up. Daisy and Piper end up at the home of a major; when he is killed, the girls strike out for home. It is a rough journey. They travel at night to avoid the military. They eat what they can find, subsisting on hazelnuts, blackberries, wild garlic, and apples. They think of Edmond and Isaac. And rejected, unloved, anorexic Daisy does everything she can to protect and care for Piper along the way.

Rosoff brilliantly depicts a countryside ravaged by war. She shows us, in the beginning, the long lines at the town grocery and the children creating, almost in fun, a war "sanctuary" in the barn. As the occupation continues, we witness the loss of electricity and water lines, the collapse of the mail system, the disappearance of neighbors as they flee or hide in their homes, and the ever present and always-moving military troops. We hear, as well, the great silence of the land.

At the same time, no matter how powerful Rosoff's depiction of war, *how I live now* shines most through its portrayal of the redemptive power of familial love and friendship. Daisy arrives at her cousins' house desperately in need of love, and she finds it in all of them—from the way Aunt Penn touches her face to the way Piper holds her hand and idolizes her to the way Isaac accepts the things she does without judgment to the way Edmond reads her mind.

Each of her three cousins suggests a single almost mystic quality. Piper, although only nine, mothers Daisy with nutritious meals, adoration, and selfless giving. Edmond reads Daisy's mind and provides her the things she cannot ask for. His twin, Isaac watches them in silent protection. At the same time, all three are fully-developed characters, and all provide Daisy with opportunities for growth. Piper suffers during her separation from her brothers. She becomes the little girl she is, and she must rely on Daisy to get her home. Daisy uses every ounce of courage she has to protect Piper and get her home, becoming the mother. Isaac, in order to save his and Edmond's lives must act—he must force Edmond to listen to him. When Edmond stops listening, he leaves his twin, hoping he will follow. Edmond is captured by the enemy, and when he returns find Daisy gone, he pulls inside himself. Daisy becomes the protector, as Isaac had been. She recognizes that Edmond "...needs peace and...needs to be loved" (193), and she does both without expecting anything in return. She takes care of the family that took care of her.

how i live now received the Michael L Prinz award for excellence in young adult literature and has been called the best young adult book for adults since *the*

curious incident of the dog in the nighttime, by Mark Haddon. It has been designated a Young Readers' Choice Award nominee in the senior division (10th – 12th grade). This is author Meg Rosoff's first novel. A hypnotic story of the power of love and friendship in face of war, *how i live now* will captivate and forever change those who read it. Due to the sexual relationship between Daisy and cousin Edmond and some graphic war images, this book is recommended for high school age and older.



Upcoming Events

The Iditarod is now underway! It's unlike any other event in the world. A race over 1,150 miles of the most extreme and beautiful terrain known to man: across mountain ranges, frozen rivers, dense forests, desolate tundra and windswept coastline. For more on the latest standings go to www.iditarod.com/. For some other information and fun activities go to <http://teacher.scholastic.com/activities/itarod/>.

Upcoming Events in May

Get Caught Reading Month. This celebration is sponsored by the Association of American Publishers. There are images of celebrities who have been caught reading and you can download copies of the images or order free posters. Some of the celebrities who were caught reading include Erik Weihenmayer, Patty Duke, Donald Duck, Whoopi Goldberg, Derek Jeter, Rosie O'Donnel, Jane Seymour, Sammy Sosa, Robin Williams and many more. Check it out at: www.getcaughtreading.org

May is **Asian Pacific American Heritage Month**, a celebration of Asian and Pacific Islanders in the United States. For more go to www.infoplease.com/spot/asianintro1.html and for books that celebrate these cultures check out <http://kids.nypl.org/holidays/asian.cfm>.

May 5 – **Cinco de Mayo.** The 5th of May is not Mexican Independence Day, but it should be! Mexico declared its independence from mother Spain on midnight, the 15th of September, 1810. And it took 11 years before the first Spanish soldiers were told and forced to leave Mexico. For more history go to www.vivacincodemayo.org/history.htm. For some fun activities go to www.kidsdomain.com/holiday/cinco/print.html

May 7-13 is **Teacher Appreciation Week.** This activity is sponsored by the National PTA to honor the dedication, passion, and caring nature of teachers. Find out more at the National PTA website and link to Teacher Appreciation at: www.pta.org

May 9 - **National Teacher Day.** The first Tuesday in May each year, the National Education Organization sponsors National Teacher Day as a way to recognize and celebrate the important roles and contributions of educators. Look at the links on this page for ideas on celebrating a teacher in your life: www.nea.org/teacherday

May 14 is **Mother's Day**. On the second Sunday of May, we celebrate the women who nurture and raise our families - our mothers, grandmothers and honorary moms. Go to www.kidsdomain.com/holiday/mom/about.html to read all about how this holiday began and get ideas on how to make it a special day for them!

May 14-20 - **Reading is Fun Week**. Reading is Fundamental is the nation's largest nonprofit children's literacy organization. Each year they sponsor Reading is Fun Week as a way to encourage families across the country to pick up the habit of reading for pleasure. Find out more at: www.rif.org

For more fun days of celebration in the month of May go to www.surfnetkids.com/may.htm



Summer Reading News

Libraries who applied for **Read for Your Library** school partnerships will be making presentations to parents, educators, and community groups this spring. Participating libraries are asked to make at least two presentations in their community. To help with this, State Library advocacy consultant Anne Abrams has created three dynamic, customizable Powerpoint presentations--one for each of the three audiences libraries are trying to reach. For more information, please contact [Anne](#). Libraries who were selected for Read for Your Library will be receiving their books, banners and CDs this week and next.

 The Collaborative Summer Library Program (CSLP) has a new resource on their web site: **Serving Children with Disabilities**. The description on the site says, "Opening our doors--and our hearts--to all children is what public service should be. Library summer reading programs offer many wonderful opportunities to reach out to children with disabilities. In an effort to assist you in your efforts to reach disabled children during the summer reading program, we offer the following resources." www.cslpreads.org/children.htm.

One of the resources you will find is a list of books featuring kids with disabilities which is linked from the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh's web site at: www.carnegielibrary.org/kids/booknook/bibliotherapy/disabilities.html.



School Zone

Thanks to Carolyn Hotchkiss, Pierce Park Elementary School Library, for sending us these great ideas.



Science Recipes For Spring

Spring has always been science time for me. After the snowflakes are gone and the groundhog has seen or not seen his shadow, it is time to grow leprechauns.

Leprechaun Recipe

Supplies: styrofoam cup, water, potting soil or dirt, plastic wrap, two small rocks, rubber band, ¼ tsp. grass seed, paper & crayons.

Trace around outside of cup onto paper. Draw on eyes, nose, mouth. Draw ears on separate paper. Cut out ears and tape onto head. Place rocks in bottom of cup, add soil, sprinkle seeds, add bit of dirt on top of seeds, pat down gently, and water. Place in sunny window and green hair should grow in one week. Keep the soil moist. Cover with plastic wrap and rubber band to send home the leprechaun with green hair. The student may cut the hair when it gets too long.

Sweet potatoes that have not been kiln dried sprout nicely and it is great to grow your own avocado plant. An old recipe for a coal “plant” is always fun.

Coal “Plant” Recipe

Supplies: 3 tablespoons water (H₂O), 3 tablespoons salt, 1 tablespoon blueing, 3 lumps of coal. Put three lumps of coal (can use charcoal) in a small bowl.

Pour water, salt, and blueing over the coal. Next morning add 3 tablespoons each of salt and water. Third morning add 3 tablespoons each of salt and water. You can add a drop of mercurochrome at this time. The “plant” should react in a week after which add a little water every few days. Now that the weather is warming up, it’s fun to see if your students can tell if water is hot or cold. Of course they all believe that they can. Try this.

Recipe for Telling Temperature

Supplies: plastic table cloth for drips, paper towels, three bowls for hot water (but not hot enough to burn skin), very cold water, room temperature water

Fill three bowls $\frac{3}{4}$ full of water: one very cold, one very hot, and one at room temperature. Place them in this order on table covered with plastic table cloth: very cold, room temperature, and hot. Don’t tell the temperature of any bowls of water to the audience. Have student place his/her left hand in cold water and right hand in hot for about three minutes. Then, plunge both hands into bowl of room temperature water. Can they tell you its temperature?

In the spring, the wind BLOWS! Try these to show that air has power or pressure.

Recipe for a Floating Card

Supplies: recipe card, scissors, thumb tack, pencil, spool (with or without thread), straight edge.

Cut a square out of a recipe card. It needs to be as exact as you can make it. To find the center draw diagonal lines (good vocabulary for math) and where the lines intersect (more vocabulary) push in a thumb tack. Hold the card up to the spool so that the point of the tack goes into the hole in the center of the spool. Put the spool up to your mouth and blow into it. Let go of the card and it will float. This takes some practice but it works. The air pressure below the card is greater than the air moving through the spool.

Recipe For a Flying Paper Wad

Supplies: Pop bottle, paper wad, your breath
Try blowing crumpled paper into a pop bottle.

Know the Numbers

The top 10 school districts in Idaho with the largest Hispanic population: *[Source: Idaho Dept. of Education, posted on the Idaho Commission for Hispanic Affairs web site: <http://www2.state.id.us/icha/menus/stats.asp>]*

- Wilder: 79.5%
- Clark County: 48.88%
- Caldwell: 47.15%
- Murtaugh Joint: 44.59%
- Glenns Ferry: 43.66%
- Aberdeen: 41.91%
- Minidoka: 38.9%
- Homedale Joint: 36.43%
- Wendell: 35.7%
- American Falls: 35.33%

A Closer Look at Creating a Can't-Miss Children's Web Site

By Stephanie Bailey-White

Kids use the Web for finding information, chatting with friends, and uncovering new interests. During the Public Library Association conference, Sara DeWitt, the director of PBS KIDS Online, one of the most trafficked kids' Web sites, talked about design tactics, site organization tools, and how librarians can develop

attractive kids' sites for their communities. She shared six tips for creating a great kids' web site and shared her experiences from working at PBS.

To start us out, we went on a brief tour of the PBS sites Sara maintains for their primary target audiences. If you get a chance, visit <http://pbskids.org/> (designed for children younger than six), <http://pbskids.org/go/> (for kids aged 6-9 years); <http://www.pbs.org/parents> (parent guides), and <http://www.pbs.org/teachersource/> (for teachers. Not only will you get some good design ideas for these groups, but there's content that most libraries could be linking to, i.e. take a look at the Bookfinder feature on the parent's page (toward the bottom of the Reading and Language page) or the Library Media menu option on the teacher source page.

Sara recommends basing your library's web content on your mission and philosophy. What is the goal of your web page? Making sure your content is age-appropriate was another point she stressed. Here's six tips Sara keeps in mind while creating "Can't-Miss" sites.

1) Let kids drive the experience.

- Make sure there's no deadends. Kids want to know where to go next.
- Use icons like a big red arrow to the next feature.
- Use clear text and font treatments. Use simple sans-serif fonts. Keep text blocks to a minimum.
- Use dark text on light backgrounds.
- Keep margins narrow to avoid reading across the screen.
- Use cues i.e. go buttons should always be green.

2) Know what your audience expects to find on the site.

Kids visiting PBS sites want characters and games. Parents want educational elements.

Listen to your audience. Focus groups and simple usability tests are great for this. PBS often builds a sample site on paper first and has children point to where they would go. Another suggestion was to provide feedback links. For children, asking specific questions about your web site helps get you the information you want.

3) Kids like to express their opinions and hear what other kids think.

This is an important thing to consider when designing your library web site and could help drive kids back to your site. Sara suggests using web tools to make this easier for your staff.

- Use form fields that kids can fill out easily.
- Have new stuff (i.e. poem of the day) on your site.
- Ask questions – but use directed questions (i.e. what is your nickname and do you like it?)
- Do polls – tell us what you think. Staff may need to review and post

- Make sure anything you ask is COPPA compliant. Basically you can use first name, age & city and not ANYTHING else (according to PBS attorneys). To read more about the Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) visit www.ftc.gov/privacy/privacyinitiatives/childrens.html .

4) Kids love sound, animation and music -- but not *too* much.

And, be careful of download time. If your site does require download time, have them do something else while it's downloading. It's also important to note that Flash and pdf documents are not accessible through search engines. If you do use Flash or have coloring pages or activities in pdf format, try writing the description in the body of your site so search engines can still find it.

5) Content needs to be fresh and timely!

Consider using a randomizer program to make this possible. Then you can set up daily, weekly, or monthly features so your site always has new content. PBS features "Today's game" and they set it up once or twice a day and forget about it, but people who visit frequently, always see something new. The same idea could be used for a book of the week, fingerplay of the month, etc.

6) Organize your content.

Create a plan for your library web page and outline your content. Start with your goals and then develop content to achieve those goals. What do you want to accomplish? Consider your library's strengths and build on these through your web site. Sara also suggested spending time looking at other sites that kids visit and other good library web pages. Find good examples, look at the html code, and borrow good ideas!

As children's librarians our target audience will usually be kids, teens and parents. There is a lot of content available now for these groups. Can linking to other content be more effective than creating your own from scratch?

- How to highlight stuff that's buried? Use questions, quiz, trivia to get kids to click though or to make it more interesting.
- Keep it simple. Don't include all your content on one page. Pick no more than 12 things and have a big arrow to more (games or whatever it is).
- Use illustrations and icons. Kids in all their usability test preferred calming colors and text.

The State Library is working on an "e-branch in a box" tool that will make it easier for many libraries to create and maintain a great web site. We did the first demonstration of this new tool at the Southwest Regional ILA Conference in Eagle last week. We plan on including as many of these tips as possible, and hope to eventually add some great features that all Idaho libraries can share. One idea is to have a page with book, music, and movie reviews by and for Idaho kids that all

libraries could link to and contribute to. Perhaps we could offer incentives for after-school programs and library YA groups to get it going?

What are your ideas and thoughts? Are you working on your library's web site? What's been your biggest barrier and what do you like the best? E-mail [Peggy](#) or [Stephanie](#) with your ideas so we can share with *Scoop* readers.

Tips & Tools

New Books at the Idaho State Library:

Guiding Students from Cheating and Plagiarism to Honesty and Integrity: Strategies for Change, by Ann Lathrop and Kathleen Foss. Libraries Unlimited, 2005. [371.3 LATHROP 2005]

The authors show that above-average and college-bound students are just as likely to cheat as struggling students. Practical ideas directed to both elementary and secondary school teachers and librarians are interspersed with first-person accounts by both teachers and students. This book is a companion to *Student Cheating and Plagiarism in the Internet Era: A Wake-Up Call*.

Student Guide to Research in the Digital Age: How to Locate and Evaluate Information Sources, by Leslie F. Stebbins. Libraries Unlimited, 2006. [025.5 STEBBIN 2006]

This book deals with the problem today of what to do when there is too much information available. Chapter One presents a step-by-step process that can be used by both novice and advanced students. The next six chapters present specific types of resources: books, articles, primary sources, biographies, legal research, and government documents. Both print and electronic formats are presented. The last chapter discussing citing sources and plagiarism.

These books are in the State Library Professional Development collection and can be checked out either by direct loan or through interlibrary loan at your library. Go to www.lili.org/isl/card-application.htm to fill out an application for a State Library card. For more information on borrowing ISL materials, call (208) 334-2150 or (800) 458-3271.



From Babbling to Books: Building Pre-Reading Skills

This free webcast is available anytime online. This webcast is sponsored in part by Scholastic, the global children's publishing, education and media company.

The webcast features Todd R. Risley, Sharon Landesman Ramey, and Julie Washington discussing research-based strategies for developing language and pre-

reading skills in young children. Visit <http://www.readingrockets.org/profdev/webcasts/1002> for more information.

 The **Idaho Community Foundation's** next grant cycle is for southwestern Idaho from May 1 through July 1. Get more information at the Foundation web site at www.idcomfdn.org/.

News Beyond Idaho

Getting Kids to Read by Keeping Their Eyes on the Prize

From *Education World*, found on Reading Rockets -- Educators know that children who read and are read to are more likely to become life-long readers but, like so many other things, children often aren't able to grasp the importance of reading until they are no longer children. In the meantime, many schools are providing incentives – from reading honor rolls to "prize patrols" – to ensure that kids keep reading.

"Reading is such a vital part of a child's education, and it takes everyone to reinforce and encourage children to read," says library media specialist Monica McCollum. "As a teacher-librarian, I think it is vital we teach reading using a balanced approach that involves two components. We must teach children how to read, and at the same time give them a purpose for reading."

Among other activities, McCollum's students at North Crossett (Arkansas) Primary are encouraged to become members of the "Library Honor Roll" and "100 Book Club."

"In the fast-paced world we live in, children do not spend as much time reading as in generations past," McCollum stated. "My goal for the reading incentive is that it will help students to develop a love for reading and become life-long readers. I tell my students when they come into the library that books can come alive and take them on a variety of adventures. Reading incentives are just one way I try to encourage students to participate in a book adventure." [To Read More . . .](#)

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Contact Us: *The Scoop* is a service of the Idaho State Library's Read to Me Program. To contribute or provide suggestions, contact [Peggy McClendon](#) or [Stephanie Bailey-White](#) at (208) 334-2150 or 1-800-458-3271.