Notes of Binge Thinker
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The Library as the Community's Education Cornerstone

Happy February! I am tired of the winter. It has snowed twice this week. I live in Texas because I don't want to deal with snow and ice. Please go away.

If you remember from my column last week, I am going to focus on five guideposts that NTLP feels libraries need to follow in the next decade when planning their service offerings. Here are the five guideposts again as a refresher.

The Library of the Future increases the overall value of its community by:

Guidepost 1: facilitating access to education as a service to the public.

Guidepost 2: staying aware of current interests within the community, finding information relevant to those interests, and making that information publicly available.

Guidepost 3: ensuring easy public access to information in all its forms.

Guidepost 4: encouraging civic participation through public information campaigns that explain matters of public policy, informing public decisions, and maintaining awareness of public services (including its own services).

Guidepost 5: maintaining its standing of public trust by operating as an independent "third voice" in its operations as well as its communications, and meeting on neutral ground.

Each month I will focus on one guidepost. I will highlight a library that I feel is following that guidepost closely and doing something innovative to make the guidepost a reality. I will then give some benchmarks (examples of what libraries can do to follow the guidepost) that the NTLP staff has developed.

This month, I am highlighting the Lewisville Public Library, lead by Library Director, Ann Wiegand. Ann was kind enough to be interviewed about what she is doing to make her public library a cornerstone for education in her community. I personally believe that what she has done in Lewisville could be one model for libraries to follow in the future.

Basically, Ann has changed the language of her library to be more education-centric. She has changed her job titles, job description, and programming descriptions to language that more closely matches that of a school setting than what you would expect from a public library setting.

Please find our interview below.

1. Please provide some background on what you are doing in your library to make it more education friendly.

The Lewisville Public Library Board and staff began a long-range planning process in August 2007 following the model outlined in *The New Planning for Results: A Streamlined Approach* by Sandra Nelson (American Library Association, 2001).

Our final vision statement, mission statement, and service priorities were as follows:

VISION STATEMENT

"Where information starts and imaginations soar."

MISSION STATEMENT

"The mission of the Lewisville Public Library is to enhance the lives of all citizens of our community by developing, supporting, and stimulating the imagination of life-long learners in order to connect to an ever-changing world."

SERVICE PRIORITIES

Stimulate Imagination: "Reading, viewing, and listening for pleasure. Residents will have materials and programs that excite their imaginations and provide pleasurable reading, viewing and listening experiences."

Create Young Readers: "Early literacy. Children from birth to age five will have programs and services designed to ensure that they will enter school ready to learn to read, write, and listen."

Develop and Support Lifelong Learners: "Lifelong learning. Residents will have the resources they need to explore topics of personal interest and continue to learn throughout their lives."

Connect to the Online World: "Public Internet access. Residents will have high-speed access to the digital world with no unnecessary restrictions or fees to ensure that everyone can take advantage of the ever-growing resources and services available through the Internet."

Visit a Comfortable Place: "Physical and virtual spaces. Residents will have safe and welcoming physical places to meet and interact with others or to sit quietly and read and will have open and accessible virtual spaces that support networking."

As part of the long-range strategic plan, we developed measurable goals, objectives and activities for each service priority. Due to various issues and delays, it was March 2009 before we finalized the plan and submitted it to the City of Lewisville.

For the next two years we thought our educational services were solid, yet we continued to strengthen them. Gradually, we tried new ideas and built upon them.

Then, in November 2010, I received an email announcing a PLA webinar: **Transforming Our Image: No Explanation Needed**. Our Adult Services and Youth Services supervisors and I attended the webinar presented by Valerie Gross, President and CEO of the Howard County (Md) Public Library.

The webinar announcement referred to Valerie's article, "**Transforming Our Image through Works that Work – Perception is Everything**" in *Public Libraries*, Volume 48, Number 5, (2009): p. 24-32)…..

The article and webinar described a "straightforward concept that enables public libraries to heighten their importance by replacing traditional terms with powerful, intuitive, value-enhanced terminology."

Valerie Gross' article caught my attention in the first paragraph and held me to the very end. She began by explaining how at a conference she was asked to include something about her work in introducing herself to others, she stated, "**We deliver equal opportunity in education**—for everyone in Howard County." When the instructor replied, "Wow…I thought you were going to say you loan books," Valerie seized the opportunity and continued, "Yes, we loan books! That's the **Self-Directed Education** pillar of our educational mission. The second pillar is **Research Assistance and Instruction**—for individuals and groups, the third being **Instructive and Enlightening Experiences**—the community and cultural concepts."

Through the article and webinar our staff learned the power of the word **EDUCATION**.

Valerie described what she had implemented at her library in Maryland, starting in 2001, and how the changes resulted in much stronger funding during an economic downturn. Having experienced two years of 70% cuts in collection development funds (2001 & 2010), frozen positions (2010 & 2011), and overall cuts to the library budget in many years, I was looking for a better outcome in the future.

For all of my 40+ years as a public librarian I have believed myself to be an **educator**. I would always tell myself that I was educating citizens -- one at a time, in pairs, in small groups, or occasionally in a classroom setting. Rarely do I remember telling the public, or the library funding body, that I was **educating** citizens. I would, instead, say the library **provided** books, A/V materials, presented programs, conducted summer reading clubs, offered book clubs, and presented storytimes for lifelong **learning**.

What I heard from Valerie Gross was, "**what is valued gets funded**."

Valerie and her staff used carefully selected terms -- "Words that work"-- to change the perception of the library.

Valerie Gross's experience opened the door for me to a new way of talking about the public library and its relationship to a community.

As Valerie highlighted, education is viewed as vital and indispensable – and our staff wanted the library to be viewed in that manner. We looked at our services and decided to move forward with Valerie's ideas.

Now our supervisors and staff look at everything we provide and offer through the word **EDUCATION**.

From Valerie's article:

Education Definition Expanded

…we began expanding the education vision to our entire program, positioning all that we do under the complete definition of education, which includes:

* the activities of educating or instructing or teaching;

* information about a subject matter;

* knowledge acquired by learning;

* activities that impart knowledge;

* the process of acquiring knowledge; and

* an enlightening experience.

We (the Lewisville Library) are using

Table **1.** Value-Enhanced Terminology

Undervalued/Misunderstood	Stronger, Value-Enhanced, Intuitive
storytime, storytime room program programmer, programming	**children's classes, children's classroom** **class, seminar, workshop, event, initiative, project** **instructor, teacher, facilitator, curriculum development, instruction**

help, serve	**enhance, improve, advance, increase, teach, tutor, instruct**
outreach	**community education, marketing**
	life-enriching, fiction (as in "fiction DVDs")
entertainment	**life-enriching**
recreation/leisure	**collaboration**
cooperation	**teach, instruct, lead, present**
do, hold, offer	**education, research (stronger)**
information (best sometimes)	**research needs assessment**
reference interview	**education**
	increase/improve reading, improving academic success/achievement
learning	**children's**
encourage/promote reading	**customer service, borrowing, loan**
	we teach the foundations of reading, social skills, and creative skills (some
juvenile	**suggested "ready at three," etc.)**
circulation	**childhood education**
"ready to learn" or "ready at five"	**customer service specialist**
emergent literacy	**information specialist and instructor, research specialist and instructor,**
	educators
circulation clerk	
librarian/library associate	

Reference	**research**

Our Adult Services and Youth Services supervisors were preparing annual reports for 2009/2010 at the time of the webinar. They edited their presentation in light of our new understanding of education….

In the reports the "education" words were used --- The adjustment to this change took more time in Youth Services. Now, several months later, youth librarians are more comfortable using the terms "class," "instructor," "teacher." We continue to use the term "storytime." However, that term, also, may decrease in the future.

Separate from the two annual reports:

Several years ago we selected four Lewisville daycare centers for regular visits by a librarian. We selected the centers relative to their proximity to the four elementary schools with the highest percentage of "free breakfast/lunch" students. A youth librarian visits one of the four centers each Friday prior to the library opening at 11:00 a.m. Each center has 12 library classes per year.

Youth Services staff taught a three-session course for parents using the Parents On Board! Video-and discussion-based curriculum published by Active Parenting Publishers. (http://www.activeparenting.com)

The Youth Services supervisor developed and implemented staff training for daycare teachers on early literacy skills, focusing on the Every Child Ready to Read program. This past Fall the class was taught for staff of three different childcare facilities in Lewisville.

The Youth Services staff developed a plan for incorporating early literacy skills into library marketing (Early Literacy Happenings newsletter) and children's classes (demonstrable skills and early literacy tip of the week).

This Fall we started a new program for the LISD Student Age Parenting Program (SAPP). We call our program Teen Parent Success. Our Adult Services Supervisor and our Teen Librarian designed the program. They visited with the teachers of the LISD - SAPP program. Features included tours of the library for SAPP students (mothers and mothers-to-be) and some fathers of the babies; classes on library tools for basic life skills, homework help, and parenting skills; classes on "Every Child Ready to Read," including reading to their babies. Classes at the library include childcare provided by National Honor Society library volunteers. Denton Public Library has a similar program.

Librarians have visited LISD schools and a local charter school to teach classes about the TexShare and locally purchased databases.

2. Why did you decide to do this? Why is this important for libraries to do?

I decided that libraries needed a stronger and more positive image when it comes to funding issues, especially to elected officials at both the local and state level.

I have served as a TLA Legislative Day Delegate Leader in the past, visited the library's Senator and House Representatives in their home and Austin offices, written letters to elected officials, and this past week spoke at length about state library funding with Representative Todd Smith, District 92, at the Bedford Public Library Foundation's Grand Opening Gala Fundraiser. I believe it is crucial that elected officials see libraries as a key pillar of education. Libraries must prepare children to be ready to learn when they enter school, keep children interested in reading and learning, teach parents to help their children learn and value education, and teach classes for citizens the tools they need to be the educated workforce that our nation needs.

3. NTLP has identified five guideposts for libraries to follow to prepare for the next decade. Our first guidepost is: facilitating access to education as a service to the public. How do you see your library following this guidepost when it comes to what you have done for education in your library?

I believe that the Lewisville Public Library is following this guidepost in all that we do. Our flyers, brochures, electronic bulletin board, library web page, and Facebook page do a great job marketing education at the library.

Other comments.

About a month before receiving the PLA notice about the webinar, the Lewisville Library made a change in our former "Circulation" unit. We had changed the sign over the entry area desk from "Circulation" to "Customer Service" when we moved into our expanded/renovated 77,800 sq.ft. facility four years ago. During the past year I began to hear rumblings from the Adult Services and Youth Services staff that they felt that the "Customer Service" sign over the front desk near the RFID self-check kiosks implied that was the only place in the Library that a citizen could receive "customer service." --- That, somehow, they (Adult & Youth staff) were no longer a source for "customer service."

So, in September 2010, we changed the sign over the front service desk to "ACCOUNTS --- CARDS & PAYMENTS" and officially changed the Circulation Supervisor position title to "Accounts Supervisor." We have had a very positive response from citizens. Citizens seem to understand newspaper circulation and blood circulation. However, we were constantly explaining library circulation. Needless to say, Adult and Youth staff members are very happy with the change.

On another note, in the City's current job audit process we are using many of the skill sets from the Water Department "CASHIER" position in the Library Assistant position job audit form. Needless to say, the City currently VALUES a CASHIER at a much higher pay grade than a LIBRARY ASSISTANT.

We will be using Valerie's "words that work" throughout all the library position job audit forms.

As a part of the job audit process we have changed the word "copy" cataloger to "electronic" cataloger.

Also, FYI, Valerie is preparing her ideas for publication in book form.

In closing, we will soon review, update, and rewrite our long-range strategic plan. We intend to replace the various undervalued/misunderstood words with stronger, value-enhanced, intuitive word.

I want to thank Ann for the wonderful information she provided during our email interview. I truly believe all librarians can learn from what they have done at Lewisville.

Here are some other task/actions/benchmarks a library could do to follow our first guidepost. My staff came up with these so thanks to them for working hard to give libraries tidbits on what they can do to follow our guidepost.

- The library can bring in an educator who will then educate the public in a classroom setting. They can have online programs catered as more of an educational course in style.

- Develop or strengthen relationships with ISD librarians (teachers?) for partner programs (esp. with ISDs now laying off librarians)

- As above but with academic librarians - especially the community colleges in the area

- In addition to terminology that Lewisville is changing, also add learning objectives in PR for programs - don't necessarily use the term "learning objective" but items such as: Come to this week's toddler class to learn opposites.

- Libraries can host teen tutoring during the school year with older kids providing homework help to younger kids. Most HS students in NHS and other academic honor clubs need volunteer hours and are pretty reliable. Farmers Branch had tutors at least 3 nights per week.

- Include educational components to Summer Reading Club programming. Again, Farmers Branch had teen tutoring twice a week as part of SRC. It was not homework

help, but the older kids helped younger kids play educational "file folder" games to keep math, science, and reading skills strong over the summer.

- Host ESL, GED, computer, health literacy, and other classes for adult learners.

- If school libraries are cut/reduced/pared down by the state budget woes, it will be even more critical for public librarians to take an active role in supporting the local school districts, providing research assistance to students, etc. This might be a good opportunity for public libraries to position themselves as necessary community institutions.

- Make sure the library's website has ample educational information: prominent and easy access to online library resources, curriculum-style handouts for storytimes and programs, portals and links to educational information.

- Establish good relationships with homeschool groups in the community.

- Partner with academic libraries to provide bibliographic instruction (but call it something that regular people have heard of).

- Empower and encourage library staff to see themselves as educators by providing training (in house and other), changing titles and job descriptions, etc.

- Ask local businesses and civic groups to support/underwrite educational programs at the library. Don't be afraid of public/private partnerships.

- Have a section on education in the library's policy that explains the library's role in youth education, adult education, and informal education (even if that means saying it is unsupported).

- Create formal partnerships with community colleges, trade schools, and adult education coops (GED programs) that give the library financial reimbursement in exchange for serving as a campus extension (i.e., improved computer access for students, proctoring services, academic library collection development, solitary and group study areas, and enrollment assistance). If funding for the library is not an option, the school should at least provide a discount for library cardholders who use the library as a college/school extension. (Adult education coop programs are supposed to be free, so student discounts are not an acceptable option there.)

- Make classrooms and study rooms a standard and expected feature of library architecture.

Ebooks

I am also looking at four possible future scenarios for ebooks and libraries. I want to go over strategy based on the scenarios presented. As a refresher, please find the first scenario below.

"I promise to carry out all of my campaign promises, the least of which includes providing every citizen digital knowledge. I will do this by providing an ebook reader so they can access the breadth of information found in our world class library."

Alan Worth, Director of the Anytown Public Library, read the quote taped on his computer monitor for the hundredth time. It had been four months since the elections and he had dreaded the day when he knew he would be called to the Mayor's office to discuss his pet project.   Alan had received the call last week from the city secretary inviting him to attend lunch with the Mayor, Bill Smith, at his favorite downtown hole-in-the-wall.

The quote itself came from the city newspaper in an article that appeared the day after the election. Many since had questioned the Mayor's sincerity about the project, but Alan had taken it seriously and had mentally prepared himself for the meeting. Libraries had changed a lot since Alan started working as a librarian 20 years earlier. With the rise of ebooks and digital information, Alan knew it was only matter of time before he would be facing possibility of providing ebooks to his patrons. He just never thought it would be on the scale that the Mayor's campaign promise had taken on.

His library board had asked Alan the week after the election if it was possible to do what the Mayor wanted. Alan spoke frankly at the time.

"I simply don't know at this point. I know that we face some legal hurdles to get over before we can safely offer all content in an electronic format, but it depends how risky you want to get. We also have the possibility of offering some, but not all of our printed material in digital format. We might have to reach a compromise of some sort. As far as cost and logistics, this would have to be researched by my staff and a plan put together. "

The board seemed happy with his response and told him to be cooperative with the Mayor's office.

The time had finally arrived.   Alan stood up from his desk to make his way to a lunch date that he had been dreading for weeks. He took a deep breath before leaving his office.

"I know we can find anything on the Internet and I don't see why we need the library to house dusty old books any longer when you can just download it to an ereader device." Andy listened to Bill Smith tell him over their salads. He grimaced at the stereotypical accusations. "We can use the current library budget to get everything online and make my project a reality."

"Mayor, I know you think everything can be found on the Internet, but this is simply not true. We have to pay a subscription to access certain data that is not publicly available. Even with the free data, not all of it is factually correct; you have to evaluate the data for its credibility." Andy told him in response. "And ebook readers are really not set up for accessing the Internet. All they really do is allow you to read ebooks."

"How about the iPad thingie? I saw on TV that you can do other things with it." The mayor commented absently as he finished the last of the salad.

"This is true, Mayor. My IT staff tell me that tablet PCs will eventually replace the dedicated ebook readers. However, these are so much more expensive, about $400 more. Do you really want to buy an ereader for every citizen?" Alan responded, disappointed that the Mayor completely ignored his comment about the validity of the Internet.

"This is what I promised and this is what I want to do. Alan, we have known each other for a quite awhile now. You are smart and resourceful. You will figure out a way to make it happen." Bill said looking Andy in the eyes. Bill reached out and grasped the library director's arm in a supportive gesture. "Don't make a liar out of me."

The food arrived and Bill smiled at Andy again. "Let's eat! I am sure you will figure something out."

Andy just sighed and started eating his food. It was going to be an interesting year.

Here is the strategy I would build if I was the poor library director in the scenario.

First, hopefully the library director will have enough sense to show to the Mayor that the idea of the city giving each resident an ebook reader is not feasible considering the cost and upkeep of these devices. The policies and procedures needed for this type of set up are a nightmare. Do you just give each citizen an ereader or do you check it out? If you check it out, how long and what happens if the ereader is damaged? If you give them away, do you provide replacement ereaders if the original one is lost or stolen?   A better approach would be provide the ebooks and let the citizens worry about getting the ereaders themselves. Another option would be for the city to give the library vouchers based on financial need for a local seller of ereaders that would be enough to purchase one per household. It is also just insane to digitize everything in the library considering that so much of it has already been done by other projects.

Let's look at the ebooks themselves. It seems in this scenario that the first sale doctrine has been extended to ebooks so libraries can circulate ebooks without worry about violating copyright.   With this model available, the publishers would mostly likely sell ebooks to libraries in the same way that they do printed materials (I write most likely because you never know what the publishers will come up with…). With this in mind, let's explore the strategy a library might employ when offering ebooks to their community.

- Collection Development for ebooks would have to be integrated into the current policy. It might be prudent for the library to conduct a study, through surveys and focus groups, to determine what type of ebooks the community will need. It is my best guess that most communities will want ebooks for the best selling fiction items and not nonfiction. In this case, the library might want to focus its fiction buying with ebooks and leave nonfiction

materials in the printed form. Of course, there will be some who will still want the printed material for the fiction as well so it might be a percentage of the collection funds go towards printed materials versus digital material.

- I have already spoken about the ereader dilemma. However, let's speak more about the ebooks themselves when it comes to technology. More specifically, what does the library need to do with its technological infrastructure to allow for the circulation of ebooks? Do they need to do anything at all?   If we retain the model in place today with services like Overdrive, the library has two choices when it comes to authenticating patrons. Since ebooks utilize a Digital Rights Management protocol for circulation, the library will be required to authenticate their patrons. They can purchase a SIP connection that will tie directly into their Integrated Library Solution, or they can use a proxy server for the authentication. Of course, in the future, we might have some new technique to regulate circulating ebooks, but I believe my point is valid that the library will need to examine their technology often while offering a purely digital service.

- With any new technology, both patrons and staff will have questions about it. I recommend the library begin a weekly class for patrons on the ebook arena and provide a quarterly class for any new staff to get them up to speed, or at least have a way to teach new staff about the technology. If ebooks become the main medium of delivering books as this scenario would indicate, then libraries need to be ready to help their patrons learn it or it will be of no use to patrons.

- Libraries are at a distinct disadvantage when it comes to ebooks. Most people will know about the online stores for ebooks. Amazon, Barnes and Noble and Sony all have their own ebook stores. Libraries will need to build some time and resources into reaching out to their communities to let them know about the ebook options available at the library. Sure, many regular library users will just find out about it because they will ask, but libraries have a potential to reach a whole new segment of their communities who might not used the library before to get printed materials, but instead are looking for a way to access digital material.

- What happens to the library building when the main medium for books is digital? I see this as opportunity for the library to rid itself of large shelving units full of dusty old books and open up the library for new services like community gatherings and youth hangouts. I am not alluding that all the printed materials will need to be weeded out of the collection. Instead, I believe the library can cut back considerably and make their spaces more inviting to users who want to use the library for services outside of the book. I recommend libraries take a long hard look at their space and redesign it based on the fact that fewer printed books will be coming in the doors.

- Finally, what about staffing. How will this have to change since the library is not using as much printed materials? This is always a sensitive topic so I advise discretion when

discussing this with your decision makers, but there might be room for some cost adjustment and reallocation of funds from the personnel line item. Do we really need as many shelvers? What about frontline circulation staff? Even professional staff might need to develop a different skill set when servicing people for digital material versus printed materials as our time might be used more regularly for training versus providing information access. All these staffing issues will have to be explored.

Next month, I will present the next scenario, Ebooks Skip the Library.

National/State News

If you have not heard about the dire situation here in Texas concerning the Texas State Library budget, please be aware that almost all statewide programs are in danger of being eliminated including funding for the Systems program, which funds 95 percent of our operations here at North Texas Library Partners. The Texas Library Association has put up a page for people interested in making their voice heard about the crisis. You can find it at: http://www.txla.org/take-action. Since the state library will need to make some hard decisions about what programs and services to retain, if you feel strongly about a particular program, you should let the state library know how you feel. You can reach them via their website at: http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/agency/contact/.

Workshops

Register for these workshops at http://www.ntrls.org/ce/. If the course is full, let us know if you want to be put on a waiting list.

- **North Texas Conference for Library Supporters**, 2/19/2011, Decatur Civic Center

- **Managing Your Time Better - It Can Be Done!,** 2/25/2011, Southlake Public Library

- **Summer Reading Club Workshop**, 3/10/2011, Wichita Falls Public Library

- **FULL Certified Library Computer Technologist Program #4** - Networking Skills, 3/10/2011, Haltom City Public Library

- **Summer Reading Club Workshop**, 3/11/2011, Euless Public Library

- **Ethics in the Library and Beyond**, 3/24/2011, Southlake Public Library

- **Ethics in the Library and Beyond**, 3/29/2011, Azle Memorial Library

- **The Showdown: Google vs. Texshare**, 4/5/2011, Benbrook Public Library

- **Managing Your Time Better - It Can Be Done!**, 4/7/2011, Azle Memorial Library

- **Help! I am a Librarian: Not a Social Worker (8 pm)**, 4/26/2011, Online Webinar

- **Help! I am a Librarian: Not a Social Worker (7:30 am)**, 4/26/2011, Online Webinar

- **Sexting and Other Online Safety Issues in the Library**, 5/4/2011, Fort Worth Library Shamblee Branch

- **Sexting and Other Online Safety Issues in the Library**, 5/11/2011, Decatur Public Library

Conferences

We have four regional conferences on an annual basis. Each conference has a planning committee that meets on a regular basis to advise the System on the conferences. We are always looking for volunteers. Please contact dona weisman at the System office if you are interested. Please register for these conferences at ntrls.org.

North Texas Conference for Library Supporters 2011
Saturday, February 19, 2011 at the Decatur Civic Center in Decatur, Texas
http://www.librarysupportersnetwork.com/conferencenews.html
Tentative Theme: ROAR!!! Reaching Out After the Recession

This conference is for library supporters and library lovers. It is one of our most popular conferences.   Our keynote speaker for this conference will be Jeff Crilley, PR Consultant and former Fox 4 report. Jeff is a longtime friend of the System and will be speaking on how library supporters can make a connection with the media to help their libraries. We will also be holding our very first closing session on outsourcing public libraries.

Library and Information Services Conference 2011
CANCELLED! This conference has been cancelled due to budget cuts.

Technet 2010
Time and Location August 3, 2011 at the Decatur Civic Center in Decatur, Texas
Tentative Theme: Quick Response Through Technology.
http://www.librarytechnetwork.com/conferencenews.html
This conference is all about technology.

Children and Youth Conference 2011
Time and Location TBA (Target Month is November 2011)
http://www.libraryyouthservicesnetwork.com/
This conference focuses on Children and Youth services.

Consulting

Our consulting program is available to member and non-member libraries, to assist with a wide variety of topics. If you have a need for a consultant, please let the System office know. If we do not have the expertise in-house, we will find one for you.

Here is a breakdown of what we offer in consulting.

IT Consulting

This program is paid for from funds received through the Technical Assisted Negotiated Grant (TANG), a Texas State Library and Archives Commission program.   It provides hands-on technical assistance to libraries from everything from desktop computing to networking. We also provide training through the program.

Plinkit Consulting

Plinkit is a service we provide to our libraries to assist them with creating and maintaining a library website. We do this in partnership with TSLAC and it is paid for in part through TANG funds. Our Technology Consultant will work with libraries in creating a website and then be available to assist with technical issues after the website's launch. The Plinkit software is a content management system (cms), which makes maintaining a website very easy.

Evergreen Consulting

NTLP established an Evergreen consortium in 2009. It named itself the North Texas Library Consortium and currently has 14 member libraries. Each participating library shares the Evergreen Integrated Library System. The libraries also share resources between their communities. NTLP provides the first line of technical support to the libraries and is the administrative/fiscal agent for the consortium.

Accessibility and Homebound Services Consulting

NTLP received a Special Projects grant from TSLAC this last year to establish a homebound program services in three of its communities. In addition, a consultant is available to answer questions from any member library that wants to start a program. We also have two consultants now to assist with any accessibility question.

Overdrive Consulting

NTLP has an Overdrive consortium of 19 libraries that share a circulated collection of online audio books and ebooks. NTLP acts as the first line of technical support as well as the fiscal/administrative head for the project.

Literacy Consulting

NTLP has a Libraries for Literacy program that endeavors to help its member libraries begin or develop literacy instruction programs in their communities. The coordinator position is available to assist libraries and is paid with funds from various sources including a TSLAC Cooperation Grant.

General Consulting

NTLP also assists libraries with a wide variety of other topics including long range planning, establishing library value and assisting the underserved sectors of society.

Digitalization Project

Due to the budget issues in Austin, we have decided to postpone work on this project until we have a firmer picture on what will happen with Systems. Hopefully, I will be able to continue it in the late Summer or early Fall.