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Librarian

the “how I run my library good”sm letter



Tower of Books, Casa de América, Madrid SPAIN
by, Danna Freedman-Shara, Fall 2003

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Contributing Editors: Pamela Berger, Sanford Berman, Jenna Freedman, Mark Hasskarl, Bernadine E. Abbott Hoduski. **Webmaster & Crossword Editor:** Ben Ostrowsky. **Adobe PageMaker Consultant:** Douglas Wray.

Contributions: We welcome contributions. U*L especially likes to receive articles of a practical nature. Very few things in book librarianship are really new in libraries. If they are not in general use, U*L would like to hear about them. Articles may be very short or fairly long, but they should contain sufficient detail to enable a reader to "do it" with no (or minimal) research.

We read everything we receive but usually cannot acknowledge or return contributions. (Be sure to keep copies.) All items sent to U*L are assumed to be sent with the idea of possible publication unless marked "not for publication." Submissions may be edited. Opinions expressed by contributors are their own. U*L cannot pay for contributions.

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PHILOSOPHY: "Books are for use." "Every reader, his [her] book." "Every book its reader." "Save the time of the reader." "A library is a growing organism." -- Ranganathan, 1931. "Library efficiency frequently consists of doing very well what need not be done at all." -- attributed to Jesse Shera. "The Library is more than information." -- Marvin Scilken. "Books are basic."

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Nutrimentum spiritus. (Food for the soul.)

Inscription on the Berlin Royal Library

LibrarianActivist.org: Creating a Website

"Librarian activism" is probably not a term that resonates in people's daily lives. However, the perception of librarians as activists is evolving, especially in the United States, where both the library community and civil liberty groups are fighting passionately the encroachments of the USA PATRIOT Act on citizens' right to privacy.

In the past year, I have realized that many librarians hold conferences, meetings, protests, and write articles on political or social issues that affect the world of libraries and beyond. My website, LibrarianActivist.org, was born out of the desire to build bridges among these library workers to give them a space to share their daily experiences and projects. The purpose of LibrarianActivist.org is twofold: first, to offer a forum where librarians can let one another know of events they have organized or of resolutions they have passed in their organizations relating to political or social issues. Second, the website offers resources to library workers who want to be active in political and social issues surrounding libraries and librarianship.

Although a great deal of effort was put into creating LibrarianActivist.org, the main purpose of this article is to show that getting a website from the drawing board to the Internet is not as daunting a task as it may seem. The following, I hope, is a quick and

painless guide to putting your own website online.

The first step in creating a website is to create the HTML files that will make up the website. HTML coding (the language used to create webpages) can be accomplished with the help of web editing programs such as Macromedia's *DreamWeaver*. However, I used a good alternative to *DreamWeaver*, which is a freeware program called *HTML Kit*. It has many of the functionalities of *DreamWeaver*, without the cost! *HTML Kit* can be downloaded for free from CNet's Download.com (<http://www.download.com>).

Unfortunately, the principles of web design and HTML coding cannot be explained in 1000 words or less. If you are considering learning how to code HTML, a good book that I have consulted frequently is *Sams Teach Yourself Web Publishing with HTML & XHTML in 21 Days*, 4th edition, by Laura Lemay and Rafe Colburn (Indianapolis, IN: Sams, 2003.)

Once you have created the website, it has to go online. This means finding a company that offers web hosting (i.e. space on a server that allows your website to become available to Internet users). There are many companies that offer free web hosting, such as Geocities (<http://geocities.yahoo.com>); however, you will not be given a unique name and instead, it will look something like <http://ca.geocities.com/dend014>; not very attractive if you want people to easily remember your website's address.

To have a website name that will be easy to remember, you have to buy a domain name, such as

www.librariesrock.com. Many companies sell domain names. For example, I bought my domain name from a company

called Doteasy (<http://www.doteasy.com>) that sells them for \$25 a year.

Buying a domain name doesn't necessarily mean receiving web hosting; however, most companies that sell domain names also offer web hosting. One advantage of choosing Doteasy was that they provided free web hosting with the purchase of a domain name. For example, by buying the name LibrarianActivist.org for \$25 a year, Doteasy gave me 20 MB of space on their server to put all of my webpages.

Once your website has a name and a place to reside, the last piece of the puzzle is to get the HTML files from your computer to the web hosting server. This is done through a protocol called FTP (File Transfer Protocol). FTP is a means for moving files across the Internet. It enables you to log on to a server and to upload files from your computer to that server. *HTML Kit*, the web editing program mentioned earlier, has an integrated FTP functionality that allows you to easily upload all your files directly to a server. The company that hosts your website supplies you with the appropriate login information to access their server.

Once the website is online, it needs to be updated with new content to keep it interesting. Personally, I am constantly looking for information to update LibrarianActivist.org. To do this, I subscribe to an embarrassingly large number of online discussion lists, though ideally, I would love to have people write to me to tell me what political and social events are going on in their libraries. For example, last year, the McGill University student chapter of the Canadian Library Association hosted a talk by Samuel Trosow, a professor at

the University of Western Ontario's Faculty of Information and Media Studies, on the WTO and the FTAA and their effect on libraries. I put up the slides of his presentation on LibrarianActivist.org in order for the library community to learn more about this important subject. This is exactly the type of information sharing that I would like to facilitate on my website. With any luck, over the years, LibrarianActivist.org will help library workers everywhere share ideas and become politically and socially active in their own communities, maybe even through their own easily created websites.

Danielle Dennie, Editor,
Librarianactivist.org, and [Soon to be] Science Librarian, Université du Québec à Montréal, Case postale 8888, succursale Centre-ville, Montréal (Québec) H3C 3P8, CANADA.

Books to Share – FICTION – 2004

Outstanding Children's Books of 2003, Fiction Titles, Selected by the Westchester Library System Youth Services Department and Member Public Libraries Children's Librarians

Reading is not a duty, and has consequently no business to be made disagreeable, Augustine Birrell.

PICTURE BOOKS – *Come in all sizes, shapes and styles, delighting both young children and those who read to them.*

Appelt, Kathi. **INCREDIBLE ME!** illus. by G. Brian Karas. *HarperCollins*. A little red-headed girl celebrates all the incredible things that make her special—from her nose to her toes and simply everything about her!

Ashman, Linda. **BABIES ON THE GO,** illus. by Jane Dyer. *Harcourt*.