

October 1, 2015

NeCessary KnowLedge

Invisible Investments

Calendar

KLA/MLA Conference	9/30–10/2
Directors' Meeting	10/8
NeCessary KnowLedge Live	11/5
Directors' Meeting	12/10

On the list of things I didn't learn at library school is building maintenance. I must confess the day-to-day aspects of maintaining the facility for Manhattan Public Library & the North Central Kansas Libraries headquarters are probably not the most riveting part of my job, but every library has a building or space where services take place. It is important to maintain a functional, safe, & welcoming environment for our customers & staff. So, we have recently completed bids for a roof replacement to cover a large percentage of our building.

Building maintenance is also very expensive, especially for large projects like a roof. It looks like this project will take most of the money we have accumulated in our capital improvement fund. While it is

an important project, it's not very exciting. You can't read it, you can't sit on it, & you can't drive it. I've never attended an event that celebrated the completion of a new roof. Spending money on the roof means funds aren't available for many things we've been contemplating, so we will be challenged to find creative solutions to address these needs & adjust our plans. While it may make me feel a little grumpy, I know that the roof is critical in protecting our resources & maintaining a great facility. Every day, people of all ages use the building to take advantage of the full array of services the library offers. They meet, use computers, and are comfortable & happy in the space without giving the roof a single

thought. I know that next year the roofing project will be complete with at least a ten-year warranty. I may frame the warranty, hang it in my office, & throw a grand completion of the roof project party! I know that NCKLS libraries face similar facility challenges, but the activities that take place inside the library make it all worthwhile. At the last directors' meeting, we met at the Marysville Public Library. Their latest renovation has created a beautiful library & a public space that citizens of Marysville must enjoy tremendously, allowing them to clearly see the benefits of a well-supported & well-maintained building.

~ Linda Knupp

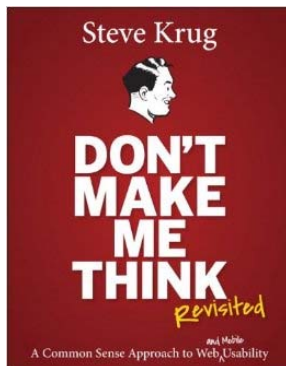
NCKLS SUPERvisor Training

September 11, NCKLS hosted a full day of SUPERvisor training. Tiffany Hentschel from the Mid-America Library Alliance (MALA) presented several topics of interest to librarians

with supervisory responsibilities, including a review of employment law, the Fair Labor Standards Act, coaching for performance, & much more. It was a very full day. Contact Teri Belin at

tbelin@mhklibrary.org if you'd like copies of Hentschel's PowerPoint presentation & handouts.

~ Teri Belin



How to Create an Amazing Website

In order to communicate with our patrons, market our services, & reach the greatest number of users, it is essential that libraries have a strong online presence.

There's no getting around it: a good website provides this presence in a way that is easy to understand & pleasant to use. To create an amazing website, take advantage of conventions that make your website easy to navigate:

home buttons are usually in the top left corner of a page, menus are usually across the top or down the left side, & search boxes are at the top right. If you don't know the convention for a particular element, browse a few sites & use them for inspiration.

Next, decide what information your website needs. What do most people ask when they call? Put that information on your website.

But, keep it to the basics. If you put too much on the site, it will become cluttered & be ignored. The key things to have on your website are:

- A link to your catalog
- A link to the "my account" function of the catalog
- The library address & hours of operation
- Contact information for the library & library staff
- Information on how to get a library card
- Library events
- A concise description of available services
- Loan periods & fines
- A link to library policies

Keep in mind that no one will read all of the content on a webpage. People skim, looking for headings & bold text to find relevant information. A good rule of thumb is to write something, cut the text in half, & then cut it in half again. It sounds

harsh, but research supports the need to be brief. Take a look at Steve Krug's book *Don't Make Me Think* for more insights.

Finally, to see how your website is performing, you can ask patrons for feedback online & in person. You can conduct usability tests, asking users to find specific information, but that can cost a lot of staff time. Services like Hotjar allow you to create "heat maps" of the most frequently used elements on your site & actually record user sessions to help you learn what is working & what isn't. With so many tools, templates, & resources available, it has never been easier to have an amazing website. For more information, contact LaDonna Clark at llark@nckls.org.

~ Danielle Schapaugh

NeCessary KnowLedge Live 2015

Join us for NeCessary KnowLedge Live, November 5th, in the Flint Hills Educational Building at Rocks Springs 4H Center. We're excited to have Sharona Guittenberg as our guest speaker. She is the founder & coordinator of MakerBridge, a community

for anyone interested in makerspaces & maker culture. To read more about her, visit her website at sharonaginsberg.com/. Some of the sessions we're hosting at this year's event are: Sunflower Selection, Positive Teen Library Experiences, VERSO,

Windows 10, TitleSource 360, E-Rate, & more. See know.nckl.info/ for details & registration. Anyone who works in your library is invited to attend, including board members, volunteers, & staff.

~ LaDonna Clark



Tiffany Hentschel at NeCessary KnowLedge Live 2015

At NeCessary KnowLedge Live, we will offer a session titled “Personnel Policy Manuals for Libraries.” In this webcast, Tiffany Hentschel will discuss:

- What are Personnel Policies?
- What do Personnel Policies include?
- What do Personnel Policies look like?
- General Personnel Policies

• And much more!
After the presentation, Teri Belin will lead a group discussion on how to develop or improve your library’s personnel policy manual. Our goal is to help NCKLS librarians with resources to be excellent supervisors. Please let us know if there is a specific topic you’re interested in. As always, you can call Teri Belin for consultation.

Other MALA webinars are also available at any time on your own desktop. For a list & descriptions of all available courses visit: www.mid-americalibraryalliance.org/webcasts.html. To order the course you want, send Carol Barra an email with the title, date, & time that you wish to view the webcast. She will send you the information & link you need.

~ Teri Belin



Are You Receiving the Speed You’re paying for?

Have you checked your Internet connection lately? Is it fast enough? A speed test is useful in confirming that your Internet connection is working up to par or as a trouble shooting tool when the Internet connection is running very slowly.

There are many sites that can run a “speed test” of your Internet connection. Though they all do a similar test, one that seems to work consistently is speedtest.net. To run a test, open your favorite browser & type in speedtest.net.

This a free site & has several advertisements, so carefully avoid clicking on the various

buttons offering to “START NOW,” “SWITCH NOW,” “Scan,” or similar buttons. Amid all the advertisements, you should see:



Click on either the “BEGIN TEST” button or the green “circled triangle” to start the speed test.

Speedtest.net displays the IP number of your Internet connect, & will perform a PING test, a “DOWNLOAD SPEED” test, & an “UPLOAD SPEED”

test. Results are displayed near the top of the test control graphic with PING in ms (millisecond) & speeds in Mbps (Megabits per Second).

Be aware that any speed test is a measure of speeds “at that moment,” & results will vary every time a test is run. Also a test will never give results that exactly match your Internet connection. If results measure above 75% of your rated speed, then that is a reasonable validation that your library’s Internet connection is working up to par.

~ Richard Miller





North Central Kansas Libraries System

NORTH CENTRAL KANSAS LIBRARIES SYSTEM

629 Poyntz Avenue
Manhattan, KS 66502

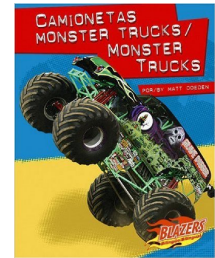
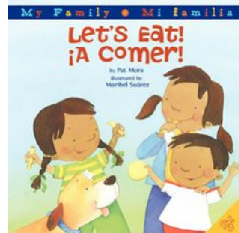
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New from the Rotating Book Van

Happy fall! Did you know that the NCKLS rotating collection has Spanish & bilingual books? I have some in the following categories: juvenile non-fiction, juvenile fiction, junior picture books, junior easy books, young adult fiction, adult general fiction, & adult non-fiction. If you have Spanish or bilingual people in your community & would like to receive a few bilingual books with each rotation, please let me know. I'll be happy to bring you some books.

~ Denise Coon



For the Legions of Fans of Sherlock Holmes

Who knew that Kareem Abdul-Jabbar was such a great fan of Sherlock Holmes? In a short video that can be found on the Amazon website, he speaks of having received an anthology of Sherlock Holmes stories many years ago when he was yet a rookie in the NBA. He says that a long-standing fascination with the stories led him to attempt writing a story that explored a different dimension of the Sherlock Holmes tales. Thus, we have the brand new mystery, *Mycroft Holmes*, which he co-authored with Anna Waterhouse.

To be honest, this is not a Sherlock Holmes tale. This book focuses instead on events from the life of Mycroft Holmes, Sherlock's older & smarter brother. We often visualize Mycroft as a stout, self-assured older man because of the way that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle

portrayed him. Abdul-Jabbar's Mycroft, on the other hand, is a young British civil servant, recently graduated from Cambridge University. Mycroft begins his own investigation into criminal activities when his best friend, Cyrus Douglas, learns of trouble in his native Trinidad. Something is clearly amiss when children are being lured to their deaths & when strange footprints are found on the shore. It is up to Mycroft & Cyrus to rush to the Caribbean & solve these strange occurrences. To the delight of the Sherlock's hordes of admirers, the crime-solving partnership of Mycroft & Cyrus leads to a delightful, witty investigation with its share of surprises. Not to be missed!

~ Marcy Allen

