No Strings Attached

By Linda Knupp

Members of the Friends of the Manhattan Public Library told me that recently they have received an unusually large number of used book donations. I wonder if this is related to the popularity of Marie Kondo’s book “The Magic Art of Tidying Up,” and the Netflix series, “Tidying up with Marie Kondo.” Maybe aging baby-boomers are simply downsizing.

Libraries should be prepared to accept or decline all types of gifts and donations with a policy to clarify what is truly useful in order to avoid unwanted gifts with strings attached.

The book “Policies for Results,” by Sandra Nelson provides a checklist of questions to address for a variety of public library policies. NCKLS has a copy you may borrow. If you are writing or reviewing a policy for gifts and donations, consider the following:

- **What is the purpose for accepting donations?**
  Do you accept used books for the collection, for used book sales, or both? Do you accept donations of food or prizes for summer reading? Do you accept money to use for a specific purpose or a general endowment?

- **What are the criteria for accepting donations?**
  How is the decision made to add something to the collection? Does the popularity or condition of the item factor into the decision?
  May cash gifts be restricted for a certain purpose? Can they be spent for a certain collection, program or other project? Are cash gifts unrestricted and spent at the discretion of the library board?

- **How do you acknowledge gifts?**
  Will you add a bookplate in books or perhaps name an area of the library? Do you list donors on the summer reading program on bookmarks or flyers, or the website? Do you maintain a donor board of the names of generous supporters? Do you send a thank-you letter or receipt?

- **Who has the authority to solicit and accept gifts?**
  Must the board approve gifts, or does the librarian have discretion to make that decision?

- **How does the library keep records of the gift?**
  It is important to keep a record of who gave what and information about any agreement, especially requirements and restrictions. This is particularly helpful for future staff and boards.

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IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES
- Directors’ meeting 2/7 on Zoom
- Presidents Day 2/18 NCKLS closed for staff training
- Summer Reading Workshop 3/7 in Manhattan
- Executive Committee 3/28
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POSTERS IN THE WORKPLACE

Federal and Kansas State law require that certain posters be displayed in the workplace. All required posters are FREE downloads from the appropriate agencies.

Look here: https://www.dol.ks.gov/ish/resources/steps-to-a-safe-workplace/download-posters-for-your-workplace

Find all the ALSC youth book awards here: http://ala.unikron.com/YMA%2019%20Wrap%20-%20LSC.pdf

BOOK FAIR UPDATE

Despite the frigid temperatures out there, spring will be here before you know it. Spring brings with it our annual Book Fair.

We have a great line-up for our May 9 program. Andy Schafer, from the State Library of Kansas, will be introducing us to the new SimplyE. Alicia Lillich, from the National Library of Medicine, will be presenting online resources for caretakers. Rita King, Baker & Taylor’s Children and Teen Service Manager, will tell us about what’s new in youth literature. And, of course, Marcy Allen will give you her best picks for the year.

The ladies of Seven Dolors have invited us to eat lunch in their newly remodeled dining room (but we asked for the chicken salad and lemon bars). We are still waiting on confirmation from an author. Mark your calendars; it should be a very full day!

YOUTH BOOK AWARDS

John Newbery Medal for the most outstanding contribution to children’s literature: “Merci Suárez Changes Gears,” written by Meg Medina, is the 2019 Newbery Medal winner. The book was published by Candlewick Press.

Come with me, today, to the Library of Congress in Washington, DC

Britannica and Google Maps have teamed up and you can not only go anywhere Google Map goes, you are able to go inside buildings! So you can go to the Library of Congress in Washington, DC today and back in time for lunch!

To start, let’s go the State Library of Kansas website, https://kslib.info/

Click Online Resources, then click Britannica - Public Library. From there we can go into any of the three options Children, Young Adults, or Reference Center. (It doesn’t matter). Then select World Atlas. Drill down by clicking the mouse on the country, city, and building you would like to visit. Once there, select the yellow man icon in the bottom right hand corner, then drop him at the door. In the image above, we see inside the Library of Congress in Washington, DC.

If this is not awesome enough, there are two other features to Britannica...

This one could be a favorite for teachers and parents to help readers make it through difficult content and to be able to understand an article. In each article, there is access to three different levels of readability. If an article content is difficult to understand, the reader can easily drop down an easier reading level, while in that article. For example, Level 1 (Children’s option) is using the Student Encyclopedia, Level 2 (Young Adults option) is using the Compton’s Encyclopedia, and Level 3 (Reference Center option) is using the Britannica Encyclopedia where the articles are more detailed and at a much higher reading level. An adult can be looking in the Reference Center and still access an article on a less complex reading level. Look for the level options above each article to change your selection view.

But there’s more! Britannica editors are writing every day, updating articles and keeping the content current. For example, you can read about the Chiefs and Patriots from last weekend.

To learn more about Britannica and other resources that are available from the State Library of Kansas, register to attend the next State Library Review workshop to be held in Clay Center, Feb 6th. Request this training at your location, or listen to a webinar from the State Library. Contact LaDonna for questions.

SERVICE IMPROVEMENT GRANT NEWS

Solomon Public Library applied for and received a service improvement grant from NCKL in 2018. The grant was used for a new shed at the library. The shed is used for all kinds of storage for the library. Last summer when the local pool was closed, the library stored outdoor equipment used to keep kids cool.
START THE YEAR OFF RIGHT

By Sandy Wilkerson

It’s time to begin preparations for a summer of stars! In 2019, A Universe of Stories will hit our libraries! Space will be celebrated this summer. Here are some tips to make your thoughts about summer reading less stressful:

- **Start planning now.**
  Don’t wait until May to get some ideas; even procrastinators have a plan. Each public library in the NCKLS region has access to the summer reading manual. Open it! The four summer manuals are full of programming ideas that will work in libraries for all age groups, including some family or community programs. There are webinars that you can watch targeting the summer theme. NCKLS hosts a summer reading workshop and three summer craft workshops. The opportunities are available to help you prepare for summer.

- **Make community connections.** Outreach, Outreach, Outreach. The library can sponsor programs anywhere. Get out where the people are; the farmers market, the ballfields, the fairgrounds, swimming pool, local festivals and the school. Cast your net wide and figure out where you will have an impact.

- **Have fun.** Summer is not easy, it’s hot…it’s busy…it’s unpredictable. But it is also fun…and busy…and constantly changing. Enjoy the theme and the kids. Enjoy their creativity and joy at doing something different each day. Work together with your community partners, have some realistic goals and be flexible. Remember that summer is for fun. Be the fun in your community!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

1. Registration is open on the NCKLS website for the Summer Reading Workshop and the Crafts Lift off at Libraries workshops!

2. Resources are available on the CSLP website. Follow these steps to access: www.cslpreads.org
   a. Log In or Create Account
   b. Find Summer Reading Resources Tab

You must be logged in to view these items. Call or Email Sandy Wilkerson if you have questions about the CSLP website. swilkerson@NCKLS.org
Winter has arrived. With that in mind, please remember that if the weather is bad (such as ice and snow), I might not be at your library on the day you are scheduled for your rotation. Because of that, your rotation might be pushed back when the weather turns bad. I always do my best to make up the missed rotation within the next 1-2 days, if at all possible. If I’m not able to do your rotation on your scheduled day, you will get a phone call from me that morning letting you know. If you have any questions, please let me know.

Sandy Wilkerson, Youth Consultant, will be traveling with me on the days she is available. It will be beneficial for her to meet you and see your libraries, plus I get some assistance from the arrangement.

TECHNOLOGY PLANNING
By Duane Mayer

Technology Plans were once required documents for libraries to receive E-rate and grant monies. These documents were re-visited every 3-5 years by state level officials. Unfortunately, the primary goal of the plans became to qualify for government money and not as a working document for each library. These plans are no longer required to be filed with the state.

NCKLS now requires a Technology Plan with the primary goal to help local library administrators and boards meet technology needs. Included in this document are hardware and software inventories with purchase and replacement dates and costs, ILS budgeting needs, and Internet bandwidth needs and costs. Each document is written to address the specific needs of individual libraries with approval coming from the local library board. While written as a four-year plan, it is hoped that it becomes a document that is updated annually.

Contact NCKLS with any questions regarding your plan.
Weeding 101

By Marcy Allen

Let’s talk a bit about weeding our collections. You may be one of the many librarians who is reluctant to do weeding for a number of reasons. Sometimes we think if we toss a book, someone will come in the next day asking for it. This doesn’t happen very often. I did have an experience several years ago in which a customer called to complain about the discarding of a book about space exploration from 1962. When I asked him about it further, and told him it hadn’t been checked out for seven years, he told me it was a go-to book on the topic. Trouble was, no one had gone to it for a very long time, and we had since added several more recent titles that even had color prints. Sometimes, too, we hate to throw away materials because we think something is better than nothing. The trouble with that is something that misinforms for various reasons is really not better than nothing.

All reasons aside, let’s consider what might need to disappear from our collections. Think about how you answer the following questions:

- Is the content outdated, especially in the areas of health, technology, and science?
- Is the book just plain silly, reflecting bizarre fashions or odd fads?
- Is the material just not used in your library?
- Is the material disgustingly soiled?
- Do your usage records indicate that the material hasn’t been checked out in a few years?
- Is the material unappealing visually, with a dull cover or no illustration?

If your answer to any of the questions is yes, it’s time to think about discarding or replacing materials. Your library is not a storehouse for old and outdated content. Your customers want and expect to find new and interesting titles, the kind of content that keeps them coming back for more. In the next issues of this newsletter, we’ll visit aspects of weeding that can help update your shelves, and we’ll see ways to go about it. Let’s get to work and up our circulation!