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A Fond Farewell from Annelle

“Find a group of people who challenge and inspire you; spend a lot of time with them, and it will change your life.”

—Amy Poehler

In 1981, after moving to Memphis to become a member of the Libraries’ Faculty at the then, Memphis State University, I joined the Tennessee Library Association (TLA). Little did I dream how TLA would impact both my professional and personal life over the next 38 years. Memories which fill my “internal USB” include:

- Serving as Chair of the Honors and Awards Committee, when a “nervous Nellie” had to sit on the stage at the General Session at the annual conference in Nashville. Before the session started I had a very congenial conversation with the man seated to my left. It was only during the session that I realized I had been speaking to Phil Bredesen, the Mayor of Nashville, who would later be the Governor of Tennessee. To this day, I cannot remember what I said to him, but still hope I did not say something really stupid!

- Attending Tennessee Library Legislative Day in the last half of the 1990s decade, I always enjoyed greeting Tre Hargett, then a member of the Tennessee House of Representatives from Bartlett. I had been privileged to work with him on a committee when he served as a student leader at the University of Memphis. Always a supporter

of libraries, it was a happy day for Tennessee libraries when he became the Tennessee Secretary of State! His leadership continues to bring joy to librarians and library users across the State as evidenced by the building of the new State Library and Archives building.

- Arriving in Knoxville for the 1996 Annual Conference and being told I had been elected the Vice President/President-Elect of TLA!

- Serving as President of TLA, 1997-1998 and attending my very first National Library Legislative Day. I learned “the ropes” in D.C. from the beloved Evelyn Clowers, President of TLA, 1996-1997, and a true friend of Tennessee libraries. But she had nothing to do with my “picking up” U. S. Representative Harold Ford, Jr. on a D.C. street corner and receiving a personal escort to the U.S. House of Representatives – Representatives’ Gallery!

- Learning how to plan and execute an annual conference from the woman who wrote the book: Sandra Nelson, former Tennessee Assistant State Librarian.

- Responding to the TLA Nominating Committee in the affirmative upon the request to be a nominee for Tennessee’s ALA Councilor position, because I knew Larry Romans, who had held that position in a most excellent manner for several years, would win easily. But, I won and served for 7

years! Thankfully, ALA members recognized Larry’s knowledge and experience and immediately elected him to an At-Large Councilor position. I was blessed that he was there with me during those years to serve as my mentor. Larry was devoted to libraries, TLA, and ALA. We miss his beautiful smile!

- Receiving appointment as the first Executive Director of the Tennessee Library Association in December 2001.

The quote at the beginning of this article says it all. I chose to spend 18 years with people who have challenged and inspired me every day, including 16 TLA Presidents who provided dedicated leadership to the association and ensured that TLA will continue for another 119 years to support libraries across the great State of Tennessee and the people who make those libraries work! To each of you: “Thank you for being my friend” and for being a part of the memories that continue to bring such joy into my life.

—Annelle R. Huggins

Save the Date!

Transforming Libraries for Graduate Students, March 16-17, 2020, Marriott Convention Center, Kingsport, TN. More information: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/gradlibconf>

President's Corner

Hello, Members! The fall is proving no less busy than the summer on the TLA front. As you hopefully know by now, the Executive Board completed the search for our new Executive Director. Cathy Farley of the White County Public Library is now full swing in her studies with Annelle Huggins, learning all she can before Annelle's official retirement. As of December 1, Cathy takes over the position entirely. We welcome Cathy into this new role and wish Annelle all the best in her retirement. Thank you to the membership for your patience with us as we moved through this process and now again as we transition.

Conference planning is coming along nicely, and I am very excited with the number of applications for presentations! The programs committee is working to notify those that will be presenters and to begin the scheduling process. I am also happy to report that the Continuing Education Committee is making progress in our efforts to begin a pilot program offering online access to select portions of the conference. Although we are starting small, I am thrilled to see us progress into this realm and find ways to make the learning opportunities of our annual conference available to all members. We are also working on logos and other aspects of confer-

ence planning and look forward to a wonderful time in Knoxville. As a side note, for those of you attending the Public Library Association conference in Nashville this February, I hope you can fit in a preconference session presented by Sharon Edwards (Mottlow Community College), Pat Bashir (Nashville Public), and myself. We will be presenting ideas for advocacy, a topic we are all passionate about. We are thrilled to have the opportunity to represent TLA on a national level and we hope to make you proud!

On the legislative front, we are also very active this season. As many of you know, TLA submitted a letter in cooperation with Friends of Tennessee Libraries, TSLA, and TASL to ask Governor Lee for a spot at the table as he works to improve his identified distressed counties. Of course libraries offer a number of opportunities to bring needed services and information to these communities. I am proud to report that you all responded to the call for action in a big way with 328 of you signing on to the letter. We hope that Gov. Lee's office understands the dedication of Tennessee's libraries to this cause and includes us in any plans as he moves forward. I'm sure many of you are also aware of the McMillan e-book situation. I want to take this oppor-



tunity to recognize Nashville Public Library for leading the way in boycotting McMillan e-books in efforts to change the publisher's course. I know many of you, including myself, have signed the petition informing McMillan of the national stance. Keep it up.

Thank you for all that you do, not just for TLA but in your everyday lives. I know that you work tirelessly to improve your communities—whether that community is a town, a school, a college, or special library, or otherwise. You are an amazing group of people and I am humbled everyday to have the opportunity to serve you and this organization in this capacity.

—Jill Rael
TLA President

TLA Conference 2020: Powering Limitless Opportunities

It's soon time for the Tennessee Library Association's Annual Conference! This year it is happening March 31 – April 2, 2020 at the Knoxville Convention Center in downtown Knoxville, Tennessee. All are welcome as there will be over 50 different sessions for all types of libraries, all kinds of services, and all library workers! In addition, there will be a

keynote speaker, special preconference sessions, an all-conference reception, and the opportunity to visit with a variety of vendors. More details to come—add the dates to your calendar to see, be seen, and get the latest updates in our field!

—Cindy Clevenger Welch



RCLS Staff: Be a Tourist in Your Own Libraries!

The staff of the Rutherford County Library System (RCLS) did something different for this year's Staff Development Day. They toured their own libraries! Knowing that many staff members do not have an opportunity to visit other branches, this was a great chance to build understanding and unity in the growing system. Branch managers at each location gave an overview of what makes their branch unique, insights into their typical patron and even some local lore. While touring, staff participated in a scavenger hunt, with clues of little-known facts of the specific location. Because each branch had undergone big changes in the past year, it was a great opportunity to show off upgrades, whether it

was new flooring, changed locations of collections or just neater shelves because of weeding, everyone had something to crow about. Of course, it was the first time for many of the staff members to visit the newest RCLS branch, the Technology Engagement Center (TEC) and even play with the virtual reality or other neat IT games. While at the TEC, staff also were able to visit our RCLS Bookmobile, our branch on the go. Everyone came away with some new insights into our system's offerings, now able to share with patrons in a more informed way when questions arise. A good time was had by all.

—Carol Ghattas



RCLS staff (top) and Timmy Gibson trying out VR at TEC

Farmer's Market Offers Fresh Food and Health Information

This summer, visitors to local East Tennessee farmer's markets got more than produce; they received free health information! Librarians and health information specialists from the University of Tennessee's Preston Medical Library spent several afternoons at Ebenezer's Farmer's Market to let their community know about the free health information

service they offer to the public. In addition to advertising this popular service, they also checked out several books, fulfilled health information requests, and welcomed 15 new library members over the course of the summer. This partnership came about when the Assistant Director of the library reached out to the local farmer's market associations

to request a presence at community events. Preston Medical Library has been supplying free, reliable health information to anyone in the community for over 20 years, and this partnership with the local farmer's markets has only increased their presence and value in the community and to the health literacy of Tennessee residents.

Halloween ComicFest 2019 Brings Over 900 Visitors

The Rutherford County Library System held Halloween ComicFest activities at five branches this year, some branches for the first time! Events lasted from 4-6 hours, and staff gave away 2,874 Halloween-themed comics (thanks to The Great Escape Murfreesboro). Comics were available for all age ranges so there was something for everyone. Activities were wide-ranging; among the branches, patrons

enjoyed crafts, movies, costume contests, scavenger hunts, drawing lessons, and cookie decorating. The next comic book event at Rutherford County Library System will be Free Comic Book Day on May 2, 2020.

—Kathleen Tyree





TENNESSEE LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 6297
Sparta TN 38583
Phone: 931.607.1182

2019-2020 Executive Committee:

Jillian Rael,
President
tnlapresident2019@gmail.com

Erika Long,
Vice President/President-Elect
erikalong.lib@gmail.com

Holly Hebert,
Recording Secretary
holly.hebert@mtsu.edu

Jeffie Nicholson,
Past President
jeffie.nicholson@williamsoncounty-tn.gov

Cathy Farley,
Executive Director
exdirtla@gmail.com



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groups/tnla

Send feedback to:
Holly Mills,
Newsletter Editor
hcmills@tntech.edu

Diversity Webinar Opportunity in January

Keep your eyes open for a College and University Libraries Roundtable webinar in mid-January. Speakers including Alex Sharp (Tennessee Wesleyan University), Joseph Winberry (University of Tennessee, Knoxville), and Irma Singarella (University of Memphis) will be presenting on issues of diversity and inclusion in college and academic libraries. All are invited! Information will be sent out via the CULR email, the TLA website, and in an upcoming Matching Sets newsletter.

—Ashley Roach-Freiman

News from the Blount County Public Library

On October 24, the Blount County Public Library celebrated their 100th birthday! The library wants to thank all of their supporters and friends from Blount County and beyond for making the past 100 years so special. We can't wait for 100 more!

BCPL spent the first weekend of November hosting their inaugural Cormac McCarthy Literary Festival, inviting authors, writers, and readers to celebrate Southern Appalachian arts and culture. Authors Frank X. Walker, Ron Rash, Sharyn McCrumb, Lin Stepp, Amy Greene, and Susan Zurenda performed readings of their work, signed books, or lead workshops throughout the three days, which also included crafts, a local author fair, vendors, and appearances by prestigious figures who spoke about Cormac McCarthy and his

legacy on literature. The mosaic on the library lawn was officially dedicated and now will serve as a memory of McCarthy and Southern Appalachian culture as a whole.

BCPL launched the publication of *Vietnam Voices: Stories of East Tennesseans Who Served in Vietnam, 1965-1975* on Saturday, November 9th in conjunction with Veterans Day. The book is based on audio interviews recorded with Vietnam veterans; the collection of 13 stories were told through first-person interviews of veterans who served in-country and was published by the Friends of the Blount County Library, in collaboration with Ed Caudill, William "Billy" Minser, and the library's writer-in-residence, Jim Stovall.

—KC Williams