

Adult Services Advisory Council
Mar 16, 2007 Meeting Notes

Attendees:

Tom Barnes (GUIL), Jo-Ann Benedetti (UHLS), Maureen Brown (BETH), Debbie Canzano (COHS), Michael Catoggio (EGRN), Judy Felsten (RCSC), Suzanne Fisher (VOOR), Darlene Miller (CAST), Katie Quinn (APLM), Pat Sahr (NASS)

Resource Sharing:

The Directors' Association met and asked that the ASAC be polled on ideas for increasing resource sharing. Purchasing books and making them available is not increasing service. The group discussed the possibilities and decided that this should be strengths that libraries have already, and that individual libraries should not be tasked to collect any one thing.

Jo-Ann will send out an email to directors, to adult services and to youth services requesting that each library let UHLS know about any special collections they have. The results of this informal survey will be compiled and send out to individual libraries as well as posted in the UHLS newsletter.

Virtual Reference:

The directors also tasked Jo-Ann and the Adult Services Advisory Council to develop a plan that would include:

- ❑ Defining virtual reference
- ❑ Determine the future of reference vs virtual reference
- ❑ Determine how UHLS can move forward in offering virtual reference and how much will it cost?

The group reviewed the UHLS plan of service as it pertains to virtual reference. Much lively discussion followed. Virtual Reference seems to be a buzz word, but the reality is 24/7 reference gets very little use. M. Catoggio had it up in Alaska and state-wide they would get about 3-4 requests per month that were outside library hours.

Many will settle for information that is "good enough" and use the Internet. We would have to compete with Google, and that would be difficult. Even now, the e-mails that UHLS libraries receive are typically asking about PIN numbers and books on reserve, nothing that needs to be answered at 2:00 AM. The group is not convinced that there is any need.

Jo-Ann passed around a flyer detailing a demonstration of WNYLRC's 24/7 reference service on May 3rd. The group unanimously decided that it would be unwise to invest any time or money on 24/7 reference right now, and the services that we currently offer are adequate.

Gale Databases

A representative of Thompson Gale visited UHLS and reviewed some databases that UHLS may consider purchasing. Jo-Ann presented these to the group. The group decided not to pursue or try out any of them.

Aquabrowser

The Automation Services Committee will be discussing Aquabrowser. The price did not come down as significantly as we were led to believe, instead the sales person quoted Aquabrowser without the federated search capability (WebFeat).

Aquabrowser is only as smart as the database behind it. It is better at finding things (e.g. mercury) rather than people (i.e. try to search "T.S. Eliot" looking for his works). One needs to be pretty sophisticated to use it, the product is not intuitive. Aquabrowser is one step away from what the Adult Services Advisory Council wants, namely, a federated search engine. ASAC recommends that UHLS NOT purchase Aquabrowser.

LSTA Grant

Jo-Ann mentioned that UHLS received an LSTA grant to provide customer service training. The first session will be UHLS's co-hosting Michael Stephens' session on Library 2.0 in May. Many other programs to come over course of the next year.

The UHLS large print collection has been weeded, updated and is being put into collections. They should go out by the end of next week to all of the libraries.

Big Read Update:

Over 100 events planned. Let Jo-Ann know if you need books or other materials.

Next Meeting

April 20th at 9:30 AM