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You Gotta Go to School for "This?" -- A Rave Review

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Policy Committee. Together, the two committees are responsible for the day-to-day management of ADPNet. In keeping with the network's guiding principles, the requirements for membership are as simple and affordable as we could make them. Participating institutions must agree to install and run a LOCKSS server in the network; contribute content to the network; and join the LOCKSS Alliance for an annual fee. There is no ADPNet membership fee.

Surveys have shown that ADPNet has succeeded in raising awareness of the importance of digital preservation among Alabama libraries, archives, and state agencies. The task now is to translate this increased awareness into participation in ADPNet.

Going Forward

ADPNet's main mission is to build and sustain a robust, inexpensive distributed digital preservation network for Alabama, but it also hopes to serve as a model for similar networks in other states and other countries who may think they can't afford to preserve their local digital heritage. Private LOCKSS Networks offer communities a low-cost, highly customizable alternative to more expensive digital preservation solutions. If ADPNet had a motto, it might be "keep it simple and keep it cheap." This basic approach appears to be working well for Alabama. It remains to be seen whether it will work for other states and consortia, but the signs so far are encouraging. 🌱

against the grain people profile

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BORN AND LIVED: Born and raised in western Massachusetts. Lived in Canada, California, Washington, D.C., Germany, and Illinois. Currently living in Opelika, AL.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: I'm the Assistant Dean for Library Technology at Auburn University, a land-grant university in east-central Alabama. I'm responsible for overseeing all aspects of library technology at Auburn, including the integrated library system and discovery tools, digital collections and initiatives, and the **Media and Digital Resource Laboratory (mDRL)**, a multimedia resource center for students and faculty. I came to Auburn from the **University of Illinois Library at Urbana-Champaign**, where I held the rank of associate professor of library administration and managed two Web-based, revenue-generating reference services. Before becoming a librarian, I was trained as a Slavist, and worked for some years as a Russian affairs analyst at **Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty** in Munich, Germany. I have a BA from **McGill University**, an MA from the **Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS)**, and an MLS from the **University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign**.

FAVORITE BOOKS: Philip Larkin, *Collected Poems*. This one seems to make the trip from the night table into the suitcase more often than any other.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: In my almost twenty years as a librarian, I have seen a shift in emphasis from content curation to content creation. In other words, I have seen libraries add the creation of new scholarly content, or the publishing of it, to their traditional role as organizers and stewards of content created by other agencies. I have also seen the boundaries between libraries, archives, museums, and other cultural heritage organizations begin to dissolve. I think these are positive developments, and hope they continue. How they will affect the industry and our field in five years, or even three, I don't pretend to know. Given the events of the past five or six months, long-term prognostication seems rather beside the point. I agree that librarianship is at a fateful juncture, and find the prospect invigorating rather than dismaying. Whatever the challenges ahead may be, I think that we can best serve our profession by joining forces with our counterparts in other institutions and focusing on first principles, which include stewardship, discovery, open access, enrichment, and — the theme of this issue — preservation. That's our job, and I don't see it changing. 🌱

You Gotta Go to School for "This?" — A Rave Review

by **Jared A. Seay** (Reference Librarian and Head, Media Collections, Adlestone Library, College of Charleston, Charleston, SC 29424) <seayj@cofc.edu> www.cofc.edu/~seay

Oh for the days when the word "rave" merely referred to speaking or writing enthusiastically (or incoherently) about something. Yet, linguistic evolution marches on. The term "rave" now describes a wild dance party. Certainly this is not news to those among you (you know who you are) who are connoisseurs of modern party culture. But, the thought of such an event occurring in a library (one with real books in it) sends the mind reeling, especially if one's mind tends toward reeling as mine does. A rave in an academic library? Who knew?

I was introduced to this rave library thing when our staff recently received an urgent all points bulletin of a student rave which was to occur at 11pm in the green just outside the library. Learning that this would involve hundreds, if not thousands, of (potentially riot prone) students who would actually move INTO the library for the main event, I realized I had served my public dutifully for the previous eight hours. I thus selflessly considered that my presence would be unnecessary.

So, though I was not physically present during the event, by piecing together eyewitness

accounts, police reports, pieces of shredded textbooks, and the extensive YouTube record of the event, I was able to conclude that my decision to leave on time after work was a wise one. Even so, it was a literally earthshaking and exciting event for the library.

Apparently it is a common thing these days for students to blow off steam during final exams. Why one would find it necessary to "blow off steam" during this time is beyond me, since during my student days I found exam times conducive to quiet reflection and relaxation. Of course, besides the fact that I may not be indicative of the norm, my memory is fading a bit, and I sometimes lie outright for dramatic effect especially when it involves my youth. In any case, this library rave thing is a growing phenomenon on campuses in which students are given access to turn the university library into a rocking, screaming, pounding, music thumping rave arena. Students fill the open spaces within the library and dance and scream (with total abandon) to unseen sources of loud music for ten minutes without pause.

For those used to the library as a place of study

and sedate informational exchange, it is surreal to see the main floor packed with a seething mass of screaming, dancing, exhilarated students. I think the sight of students crowd surfing across the rotunda amid a blizzard of shredded textbooks (being precipitated from the second and third floors) was particularly memorable and striking. For those ancient ones among us who have never experienced such a thing (or don't remember it) the rave has all the noise, chaos, and mayhem of a street riot, but with much less tear gas and much happier people. It is also over as quickly as it begins, which tends to calm the police/security who just stand to the side and grin a lot.

Across the country there are also so called "silent raves" in which everyone listens and dances and wiggles (silently of course) to the same music on their iPods. It's a sort of a synchronized chaotic, silent dance thing. This removes the

continued on page 49



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Op Ed — IMHBCO from page 48

of keyword searching. Our patrons, however, would generally rather run the risk of missing a relevant title than go through the contortions that are necessary to use the library catalog, especially in the ways we think they should.

Our patrons may be dead wrong in all of these attitudes, and we librarians may be right. But being right will not save us from marginalization if our patrons decide the library is no longer relevant to their research agendas. If they believe wrongly that we're not relevant, the effect on us will be exactly the same as if they were right. **Google Book Search**, in other words, is our problem — not our patrons' problem.

A similar principle applies to funding. When faced with budget cuts and demands for increased service (or even maintenance of services at current levels), our temptation will be to respond to our host institutions by saying "Sorry, you can't have those services anymore because you're not giving us enough money." While that may seem like a perfectly reasonable response, it really doesn't matter whether it's reasonable or not — what matters is the effect it's likely to have on those who have to make tremendously difficult funding decisions for the institution as a whole. Before responding in that way, we should look around at the academic departments on our campuses: are professors taking on heavier teaching loads? Are they cutting their travel budgets? Are they making do with fewer student employees? If so, we had better be very sure that the library

is doing similar things before claiming that we can no longer afford to provide services that our patrons want. If a professor who has just cancelled a conference trip and taken on two additional sections of a freshman survey class sees librarians sitting for long lonely stretches behind deserted service desks (or, worse, taking hour-long coffee breaks in the student union), you can bet that there will be repercussions — and there should be.

Of course, sometimes budget cuts are deep enough that the library has no choice but to make cuts to some service areas. When this is the case, attitude and tone make a huge difference. Imagine this situation: the library budget has been cut by 10%, and at the same time the university administration is asking the library to stay open past midnight on weekdays. Here's the natural response: "You want us to be open past midnight? Fine. How much of our budget will you restore so we can hire more staff?" (Translation: "This is your problem, not ours. When you figure out a solution, we'll be willing to try and implement it.") Here's a more effective response: "We would love to stay open past midnight; we know our students have wanted that for a long time. In order to make that work, we'll probably have to close earlier on weekend nights, or reduce service in another area in order to support the late-night shifts. Would that be an acceptable tradeoff?" (Translation: "Our goal is to do whatever we can to serve you well. We can't afford to do everything we'd like to do, but we're anxious to find a way to make this work.")

In the past, when times have gotten tough, libraries have been able to defend their budgets

by appealing to the ways that we — and only we — could provide essential support to the teaching and research missions of our institutions. The current financial crisis has occurred in a completely different information environment, one in which many other players are fighting hard to supplant us in our traditional roles. We can no longer assume that the old arguments will still work. It's time for us to swallow our pride, roll up our sleeves, and start dealing with the fact that we have competition to beat — or, if we can't, start figuring out new ways of being essential to our institutions. A good way to start is by focusing on our stakeholders' problems rather than our own. 🐼

You Gotta Go to School for "This?" from page 47

noise level problem and accompanying police intervention while maintaining the shared communal audio and physical experience.

Is this made for a library or what? It's perfect. We are only one step away from the "silent-read-rave." I predict it will soon sweep across librarydom. A silent-read-rave is of course where all the participants in the library listen to the same audio book in individual headphones synchronously and react (dance, sway, thoughtfully absorb, mime literary criticism) simultaneously. The more adventurous of the participants may even be compelled to branch out into actual reading (we're talking real paper here). Now there's a library innovation for you. 🐼