ATG Deadlines

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It seems that our days fly by in a mixture of advancements, discouragement, challenges, and changes. Now that I am retired, I have the privilege of visiting many different types of libraries and talking with the stewards of knowledge. You have no idea how important you are to the quality of our culture and the wellbeing of its actuarium. Sometimes we come to work looking for those special answers for individuals, not knowing if it will make a difference at all. In academic libraries, it is easier to understand our impact on the success of students and faculty, and some general public. Special Libraries are devoted to the advancement of knowledge in specific subject areas for researchers. School Libraries help those beginning to understand the world and its functions at the base levels. I am particularly curious about Public Libraries. When we dashed into the new millennium, I worked in academic and public venues as a way to earn privileges and money to further my education. I began to understand the interesting association of libraries and the community at large. As the general public used our facility, I saw the way our information specialists influenced and aided each human being. Of course, we helped the children from nearby schools, as our branch endeavored to encourage and enlighten children of all ages understand all the various subject areas and develop wonderfully creative papers for their classes. But, I also understood the various other community inhabitants who were undergoing different problems. We used to help families look up information on a number of different physiological and health problems that their family members were being treated for in the Veterans’ Hospital only a few blocks from our door. We not only found information for them, but we held their hand or gave them a shoulder to cry on when they understood the severity of the diseases.

We have spent time helping teenagers explore grief, bullying, and specialized learning as they strive to understand their roles and new coping abilities. We were always watchful for suicidal tendencies and gave them positive alternatives instead of the more common negatives imposed by families and friends. We were special friends.

We became helpful to those people trying to recover from work shutdowns in nearby industries. People came in depressed and they walked out holding their heads higher, finding reasons to have hope because we helped them develop resumes, get them ready for interviews, or walk them through the establishment of a home business.

I think the hours I spent working in a Public Library were some of the most treasured and satisfying I have ever spent. I established personal relationships with the community and became a valuable resource for people’s thirst for knowledge and choices for reading or viewing materials. There was not a day that I didn’t feel like a valuable part of this extended family. Over the many years of my library exposure from the age of four to well over sixty, I have discovered that we not only protect the knowledge of the world, but we make it accessible and understandable to the public. We are the cultural standard that others use as a pattern. The freedom to use this material comes with the responsibility for the general public to be mindful of keeping the information in good condition for others to use as well. I think it is important for us to be a positive influence on the general public and to present ourselves as that cultural standard in their lives. Since we have lost the actuality of others being our examples, perhaps we can strive to maintain our presence in their world as the Example for them. Perhaps this is something we should think about every day?