Notes from Mosier-In the House of Wind and Rain

Scott A. Smith
Langlois Public Library, scott.alan.smith@comcast.net

Follow this and additional works at: http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg
Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

Recommended Citation
Smith, Scott A. (2012) "Notes from Mosier-In the House of Wind and Rain," Against the Grain: Vol. 24: Iss. 6, Article 37.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.6251

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.
Notes from Mosier — In the House of Wind and Rain

Column Editor: Scott A. Smith (Library Director, Langlois Public Library, P.O. Box 127, Langlois, OR 97450) <scott.alan.smith@comcast.net>

“In praise and support of the (very) small.” Well, readers, I’ve just taken up my duties as Library Director of the Langlois Public Library, located in Langlois, Oregon. We’re the westernmost library in the lower 48, on the south Oregon coast, about halfway between Bandon and Port Orford. (My friend Dan Masoni, director at the Unalaska Public Library in the Aleutians, reminds me his is THE westernmost library in the U.S.)

Langlois is a very small town blessed with a very good library. It’s testimony to how devoted and supportive the patron base is that we have an excellent collection, a strong and active Friends group, an engaged and dedicated board, a fairly new and quite functional building in the county, and a great staff. It’s a spectacular place in which to live (although in the last week we’ve had 100-mph winds and parts of Highway 101 have been under water; it’s also a tsunami risk zone).

So I’m entering the next phase of my career, directing a library that serves as library, community center, and an almost daily base for a core of patrons who rely on us for books, internet access, DVDs, and more. It’s a challenge I very much look forward to.

We’re so far south on the coast we’re beyond day trippers from Portland or even Eugene, and we’re too far north for most Californians. We have a lot of local businesses devoted to sustainable agriculture, grass-fed beef, and life off the grid. Today one of my patrons brought me a huge bag of Matsutake mushrooms (this part of the coast is mushroom — and oyster — heaven); I tried to pay him, but he wouldn’t hear of it. These things sell for $25 a pound here and over $100 in Japan.

The dynamics of small public libraries are very different from the academy; it’ll be a steep learning curve. Little in library school teaches you about special districts, dealing with boards and patron groups, and the sometimes gritty aspects of managing a small library. That said, the other directors have been enormously gracious (including Buzzy Nielsen, now director at the Hood River Public Library District, who began his career here); I look forward to working with them.

My work in Holmes County back in Ohio well served to prepare me for this job, and I’m very grateful to the staff there for all their help. After nearly thirty years as a book vendor, it’s a refreshing and compelling position to find one in as a library director. I’ll keep you posted! 🌊

Acquisitions Archaeology
from page 8

- Should vendors protect themselves by discouraging a particular format (or formats) in standing orders and approval plans?
- With the ascension of eBooks to “mainstream” status, do we all have new expectations about the role of libraries in the information marketplace and their underwriting of scholarly communication? If the tension between paperback and hardcover versions was already complicated, what happens when an e-version is sometimes published, made available through a variety of aggregators, and sold in not only traditional ways (library-selected, approval plan-supplied) but also via demand- or patron-driven models?
- The question “Should we be concerned about long-term effects of change on vendors” is somewhat moot, as long-term change in publishing is a foregone conclusion. A more productive line of questioning is “Can we determine what the long-term effects of these changes will be, and can we work with vendors to support our libraries’ respective missions and users in both the long- and short-term?”

The Charleston Company
6180 East Warren Avenue, Denver, CO 80222
Phone: 303-282-9706 • Fax: 303-282-9743

Subscribe today at our discounted rate of only $75.00

The CHARLESTON REPORT
Business Insights into the Library Market

You Need The Charleston Report...
if you are a publisher, vendor, product developer, merchandiser, consultant or wholesaler who is interested in improving and/or expanding your position in the U.S. library market.

You Need The Charleston Report...
if you are a publisher, vendor, product developer, merchandiser, consultant or wholesaler who is interested in improving and/or expanding your position in the U.S. library market.

You Need The Charleston Report...
if you are a publisher, vendor, product developer, merchandiser, consultant or wholesaler who is interested in improving and/or expanding your position in the U.S. library market.

You Need The Charleston Report...
if you are a publisher, vendor, product developer, merchandiser, consultant or wholesaler who is interested in improving and/or expanding your position in the U.S. library market.