

MSLA FORUM

Winter 2009



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FORUM CO-EDITORS: Patsy Divver and Jan Koleczar

President's Message by Sandy Kelly, LMS NBCT

The last few months have been a whirlwind of school library activities and conferences. In the past several weeks I have attended our own MSLA conference, MassCUE and the SLJ Leadership Summit in Florida. In addition, I wish I could have included the Connecticut (CASL) and Christa McAuliffe conferences to which I was invited. In January, I will travel to Denver to attend the ALA Midwinter conference...and through it all, as everyone does, I juggle the work, home, family events as gingerly as I can. The more I do, the more I wish I could do. In this high tech, virtual world, why can't anyone figure out how to make a day longer? Oh well, perhaps that is best left undone!



The one thing that stands out in my mind as I travel through all these events is that technology is flying at warp speed ahead of us. As you read through the articles in this issue of the MSLA Forum you might learn of new research, online games, electronic advances and new worlds you didn't know existed. I continually ask myself how we can keep ahead of our users, the students whose lives are impacted by it all daily. The one thing I know is that the kids are already way ahead of us, and they know it. I continue to ask, "Who is teaching them to use it ethically, safely and to their best advantage?" One area that most parents are not versed in is teaching their kids the "manners" or safety measures they need to know. If we are not doing it in school, then who is? As in the past, they are learning it from their friends. Somehow we need to get beyond our fears, help our districts move beyond their fears, and take the bull by the horns for our kids' sake. We need to surpass the mentality that was pervasive when schools first went online, 'what if they misuse it and what about all that porn?' If we do not slowly, carefully, start to open access to these social networks and web 2.0 technologies, then many students will continue to leave our schools woefully unprepared for the 21st century. It is school library professionals that need to take the lead in educating our administrators, teachers, students and their parents about Informational Communication Technologies (ICT). Do we believe that kids take a step backwards everyday they come to school and leave their virtual world at home? That is what is heard in the national conference circuits, yet, these virtual spaces are the worlds they will need to navigate in the future to network, gather, remix and create new information, and to collaborate with their own colleagues.

Joyce Valenza, on her NeverEndingSearch blog nicely summarizes the Partnership for 21st Century Skills, *Transition Brief: Policy Recommendations on Preparing Americans for the Global Skills Race*. Joyce states, "The document offers broad proposals for forging a workforce and creating an education system that will thrive in the 21st century."

Chelmsford High School's *Learning Commons: From Program to Facility* by Valerie Diggs

Students streamed into the library carrying trays of food, bottles of water and sports drinks, and paper bags bursting at the seams with sandwiches, fruit and cookies. This was a typical Friday during the school year.



Fridays were *Listening Lunches* days and the students loved the opportunity to have lunch in the library while listening to their peers read poetry, sing songs, perform plays, play musical instruments, and more. Large rolling barrels stood ready to accept the half-eaten lunches and empty bottles, round tables adorned with tablecloths and vases of artificial flowers were arranged in the back corner of the library, and rows of red folding chairs awaited the throngs.

On Wednesdays each week, our *Java Room* opened at 6:45 AM, pots of steaming coffee and hot water for tea and hot chocolate lined up beside the aging classroom desks placed side-by-side in the center of the library serving as a *Reference Desk* of sorts. Trays of donated pastries and bagels, here

through the generosity of local Chelmsford businesses, beckoned hungry students and staff members. The lines were long, the laughter loud, the books on display enticing students to browse and check out books while they waited for their hot drinks. Students sat and talked, teachers and administrators readied themselves for a day of teaching and instruction by recounting events of the previous days and catching up on daily news.

And, every day, the library was full of teachers and their students ready to learn and discover. With a large space, enough room to accommodate six classes at tables and 38 students using the computers, the library provided students at Chelmsford High school with the opportunity to ask questions, think about the answers, and create new meaning each and every day. Staff professional development sessions were held in the library, teachers came to work, students came to relax and learn, and our community showed us every day how important we were to the mission and ideals of our school.

All of this took place in a facility that was as dreary and tired as the duct tape that held the carpet together and kept the insurance inspectors at bay. As hard as I tried to convince our administrators that renovating the library would benefit every student and staff member in the school, my detailed reports, requests, budget submissions, and pleadings all were for naught. The District of Chelmsford began a 31-million dollar renovation plan which included a new performing arts center, new science wing with sparkling new labs, technology classrooms, and instructional spaces. The two middle schools received new libraries: 5,000 square foot wonders that soon became the "place to be" in both buildings. Other schools were outfitted with new flooring, roofs, boilers, etc. And through all of these renovations and building projects, the high school library remained as is: a tired, 34-year old space, with duct-taped carpet, bright yellow shelving and walls, and desks with broken drawers and peeling facades.



I admit, I did whine. But, whining did not seem to work. Now what? We had just hired a new town manager, Paul Cohen. In the process of interviewing Paul, he was taken on a tour of the town's buildings and facilities by the town's search committee. As for schools, he saw the high school (minus the library) and was escorted through the new science wing as well as our two beautiful new middle school libraries. The search committee didn't dare

bring him near the high school library. It had become so embarrassing a space that avoiding it was a commonplace and accepted practice. So, I invited Paul Cohen for a special visit to my library.

To hear him tell it, it was the first time he had ever been called by a school librarian in his over 17 years of public service. He came and saw. I gave him a tour, served him coffee in the workroom, told Paul all about our programs, services, and student learning experiences. He saw for himself not only the duct tape but the entire, sorry mess. That fall, the capital budget was announced and included over \$200,000 for the renovation of the



high school library. In this case, a tour was worth many thousands of capital funding dollars. The rest is history.

Chelmsford High School now has a beautiful new space. We celebrated the opening of this space and its new name. *The Chelmsford High School Learning Commons*, on December 5, 2008. Our consultant, Carolyn Markuson, was on hand. Rolf Erikson, who worked alongside Carolyn, was in Germany and sadly unable to attend. The evening was a huge success.

When 2pm on the afternoon of our 3pm – 6pm Grand Opening Event rolled around, and I was sitting in my new *Learning Commons* space with Ross Todd and Carol Gordon from Rutgers, David Loerstcher from San Jose State University and Hi Willow Press, along with Connie Champlain, I said “pinch me, I think I’m dreaming.” The event was a huge success. The speeches were grand, from Ross Todd’s passionate endorsement of the Learning Commons model, to past and present principals of Chelmsford High School, Chairperson of the Board of Selectmen, our state senator, and our Town Manager, Paul Cohen. School and public librarians came, as well as representatives from the Board of Library Commissioners and Simmons College, and from our very own executive board. Parents, teachers, school administrators, and students were all present to celebrate this success.

Why a Learning Commons? How did we choose this path? How did the design for the space become a reality? First, and above all, came the program. The design simply flowed from what we do every day. Our school library had become central to everything meaningful in the school. Our only choice in a new design was to make the space fit our program.

And, fit it does!! From our café area with high tables and stools, to our built-in counter which accommodates laptops, to our restaurant-styled booths, to the comfortable lounge furniture and large meeting/performance space, our new *Learning Commons* is more than ever a place where students and staff are the center of all happenings. Activities, learning experiences, literacies, teachable moments, information sources, and technology explorations occur every day, all day. Please come and visit, view the YouTube video, and see the before-an-after slide show at http://docs.google.com/Presentation?id=df369mb7_68frqjwf6, visit our website at <http://www.chelmsford.k12.ma.us/chs/library/index.htm>, or read the Boston Globe article at http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2008/12/08/new_learning_commons_defies_common_place/, and most of all, **believe that you, too, can fulfill your dreams!**



Valerie Diggs is the Director of Libraries in Chelmsford and Library Teacher at Chelmsford High School

them and our colleagues about cyberbullying, trolling, and other harmful behaviors and offer ways to handle it just as we teach outside of the cyberworld. The most memorable quote was “educate not legislate.”

Interestingly, kids are not hanging out in virtual worlds like Second Life. Teens are more involved in sites called gaia, webkidz, wee world and mtv. By 2011 it is predicted that 50% of all kids and teens will exist in virtual worlds. Today, myspace is becoming more content based where facebook is used more for communicating with friends. The skills that they use outside of school are the skills they will need when they leave school in the 21st century world. If we block the social medias, under-privileged kids are not getting equitable access. Once again we are creating a community of haves and have-nots.

Some of the things we can be doing to begin to close the gap between the generations:

- Create a profile on some of the social websites to understand how these sites are used and their functionality.
- Have kids sign up for text messages for new books
- Provide homework support via IM
- Talk about appropriate use, use inappropriate examples as “teachable moments.”
- Teach about new ethics and good uses of the social networks such as use of portfolio sites for their work, sharing good resources via sites like delicious, creating their virtual image or reputation in a positive light.
- Teach them the ethics associated with plagiarism, that nothing is private online and to think twice before posting their personal images and information.

In the breakout session, *Nonfiction Matters*, science writer Vicki Cobb said, “Technology can allow an author to network with their readers and develop relationships and links, but the book becomes the center or highlight of that relationship. She showed a video that kids made demonstrating some of the experiments in her books. It was an easy suggestion to try in your own library to extend the nonfiction books kids are reading. Marc Aronson who writes reviews and articles for SLJ talked about Rick Riordan’s new series, *39 Clues* as an excellent example of how the digital world is helping the book. Each book comes with 6 cards. The first card pack comes with 6 cards randomly pulled from a pool of 55, as well as a game guide with tips on how to play. Each card comes with a unique identification code. Kids enter this code on a website to create their own online card collection!

In, *Opening the Book: Matchmaking Nonfiction Books and Educational Technology in the Digital Age*, the presenters said high interest nonfiction is replacing a curriculum driven collection. Emphasis is on recreational reading. Electronically, online accessibility is key. Much of reference is now available digitized in a combination of subscription databases and free. The real task for users now is not to locate information, but rather to evaluate it. Students create content, and therefore drive the collection. We should question how much library real estate we are now devoting to the print reference collection. Can this space be used in more valuable ways? What is a book – a story or cache of information comprised of written words and/or pictures with a clear intentional organization. We know books, they are collectable, we can hold them, but the disadvantages include: warehousing them, the environmental impacts of paper use, and the fact that they can be as expensive as can digital resources which often need upgrades or involve added costs for new features. All of these considerations now come into play as we make purchases for our libraries. **Memorable quote: “Books left on the shelf can last a lifetime.”**

Other sessions included Doug Johnson on copyright and fair use, a topic he often addresses on his “Blue Skunk” blog, always an interesting read. Doug feels we are all consumers and producers of intellectual property. Everyone should be using the Creative Commons as a resource for students to use and remix to produce their own work and then post it back to the commons sharing their work for others. On the other hand Doug feels how we as librarians deal with copyright and fair use gives us an image problem, and we need to change our role from cop to counselor. Fair use guidelines are just that, guidelines not laws. We should be advising about what is permitted not what is forbidden.

Sandy Kelly is the Library Teacher at Carlisle Elementary School and president of MSLA

Mass Center for the Book by Pat Keogh

The Massachusetts Book Awards were presented on November 20, 2008 at an impressive celebration in the Hall of Flags at the State House. Three children's/YA authors were honored as well as adult writers for fiction, non-fiction and poetry.



Jacqueline Davies' delightful novel for young readers, Lemonade War, is already a favorite at many schools. Siblings Evan and Jessie, suddenly in the same grade, no longer work a lemonade stand together but choose other partners and battle for business.

Kathleen Duble creates a story of suspense in Bravo Zulu, Samantha. Unhappy that she must spend a summer with her grandparents, especially crotchety grandfather, Samantha gradually learns to understand her grandfather's unhappiness and has the opportunity to help him with a secret project. Should she? Samantha learns about growing up and growing wiser.

Whale Port, a fascinating story for all ages, is a collaborative effort of a talented father-son team, **Mark and Gerald Foster**. When colonial farmers left home to go whaling, it is doubtful they realized what changes it would bring to a new country. Although the author chose a fictional setting, Tuckanucket, readers will see New England throughout the historical piece. Illustrations bring every page to life.

The Center puts out a list of recommended titles as well. I particularly enjoyed Jeff Kinney's Diary of a Wimpy Kid and Rich Michelson's Tuttle's Red Barn illustrated by Mary Azarian. Pair this with Whale Port for an explanation of growth in New England over the centuries.

Check out massbook.org for other programs the Center runs.

How fortunate we are to have so much talent within the children's literature community!

Pat Keogh is retired from teaching as a Library Teacher

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Dear Massachusetts School Librarians,

We have posted recommended reading lists from the 8th MassBooks at our web site. You can access these lists from our homepage -- [www.massbook.org](http://www.massbook.org). They consist of 10 to 15 books in each of the four categories (fiction, nonfiction, poetry, children's/YA lit) that our judges felt were great reads. The award books are listed at the top of each page followed by a highly recommended. Feel free to print these out or direct your students to our page for reading recommendations!

Photos and videos of the awards event will be posted to our site in the coming week or so. The reading guides will be up by January as well. Library volunteers have done an extraordinary job with them this year.



The deadline for the 2009 awards was January 15, 2009.

If you want to become more involved with the awards program, please email me at the following address to indicate if you would like to be a judge, a reading guide developer, and/or a volunteer for the awards event: [massbook@simmons.edu](mailto:massbook@simmons.edu)

Sharon Shaloo, Executive Director  
Massachusetts Center for the Book

## Being Connected, Being a Professional: Join NESLA and ALA/AASL by Ann Perham

Most of us are “lone rangers” in our schools, working without colleagues who are “like us”. For certain, we work with each member of our faculty and are on every committee possible, but the fact remains that we work alone. As a singular voice for the school library program, we are not very loud. Here is the logic for joining MSLA and getting the support of our colleagues via the listserv and by attending the conference. It’s the professional thing to do and there is power and comfort in numbers. MSLA works tirelessly on the regional and state level to make you a better library teacher and to elevate the profession within the state of Massachusetts. I take pride in seeing the vitality within MSLA and the active role school libraries are playing within our state.



Extending the logic of professionalism, comfort in numbers and working together to make changes, **every school librarian should also be joining the regional and national organizations.** I admit that before I stepped into the position of president of MSLA, I had never belonged to a national professional organization. I started receiving the ALA magazine, “American Libraries” and the absolutely amazing AASL publication, “Knowledge Quest”. Reading professional publications is an “Intravenous drip” of professional development. “I don’t have time to read anything more” isn’t acceptable – you owe it to yourself as a professional.

Joining your national professional organizations – ALA and AASL – joining is in itself is a

critical way to support them as they work to better school libraries across this nation. We all watched Senator Reed as he introduced the Strengthening Kids' Interest in Learning and Libraries (SKILLs) Act, *with the support of ALA and AASL.* Benefits extend beyond lobbying efforts. We’ve all received the new AASL Standards, Learning4Life. Every one of us has used the ALA site to access their “best books” list, or in planning our Banned Books Week programming. Perhaps you have shopped on the ALA site for posters or professional materials (and missed a discount if you were not a member).



Your dues to ALA and AASL will support their work. A personal membership in ALA will set you back \$65 for the first year, but it’s an investment in YOUR profession. From the ALA site, on the benefits of membership: *“Membership in the American Library Association (ALA) starts to pay you back the moment you join. With discounts on products and services, and members-only access to information through our website and journals, you will benefit right away. Included in many of these benefits are resources to advance your career, your library, and the whole profession.”* Interested in the divisions? Student membership? Retiree rates? This PDF will give you all the details:

<http://www.ala.org/ala/membership/typesmembership/personalmembership/20082009personalapp.pdf>

While you are in the joining mode, consider joining **NESLA – the New England Association of School Library Associations.** You may remember them as NEEMA, their name up until a year ago. As a member of MSLA, these dues are only \$20. NESLA brings together leaders of the six New England states with the goal of sharing ideas and of furthering the profession. Complete joining information is available on the NESLA website: <http://www.neschoolibraries.org> Watch for details of their March Leadership Conference.



Attending a national conference is amazing and I highly recommend the AASL conference in Charlotte NC Nov 5-8, 2009: <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/conferencesandevents/national/charlotte2009.cfm> For first-time attendees, Bound to Stay Books is offering a scholarship: <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/index.cfm>

**Because we work alone does not mean we are alone.** Joining your state association (MSLA) is the first step towards connecting and supporting the profession. Put it on your “to-do” list....join ALA/AASL as well as NESLA. **Be Connected.**

*Ann Perham is a past president of MSLA and has been on the Executive Board for 10 years as the webmaster. She was elected “Director-Elect” of Region I for AASL in 2007 and will begin her 2 year term as Director in June 2009.*

## Reflection on Learning, Teaching, Growing by Mentoring a Library Intern by Rochelle Garfinkel

I have been known to be a control freak, I admit it. But I also love to learn. I love learning so much that I have two Master's degrees. I go to workshops nearly every month, and some months I may go to more (thanks to all the great free offerings from my regional library system). I thrive on learning from others, pushing boundaries, talking about what others are doing to spark new ideas to try. I love to collaborate on projects, bounce things off people, and get a second opinion from trusted colleagues. That way the learning comes before the risk-taking.

My love of learning is one reason that I decided, in my late 30's, to go back to school, to change careers and become a librarian. Too, when I took a look at the previous 20 years of my professional life, I realized that I had informally created a library of sorts in nearly every organization I'd worked. I was often the one that colleagues came to with technology problems and questions to solve. Essentially, I was functioning as a librarian without working in a library or having any formal library training. Now that I am working as a librarian, I get to learn constantly. Every reference question, class project, new web 2.0 tool - they are all an opportunity to learn something new.



I thrive on professional relationships and interactions that allow me to intellectualize about my job. As an introvert, it is important that I talk about my successes and failures with others who understand what I really do. I think that only other school librarians (a job title I prefer and use to label myself) understand fully what a school librarian does. If we are doing our jobs well, teachers know what we do in relation to helping them with class and helping their students with research. Administrators know we manage a budget and space for which they give us responsibility, and students know we can help them find anything they need to find. Hopefully, no one still thinks that all a librarian does is read books and check them in and out all day. But still, only another librarian knows the ins and outs of what a librarian does. The problem is, when you're the only librarian in the building, how do you have regular contact with another librarian who "gets it"? The answer is to supervise a school library intern.

I had been waiting three years for it to happen and finally, this fall I got my "very own" library intern. Having just recently been through the MLS/School certification program at Simmons myself, I was just so excited to finally have the opportunity. I cannot recommend it highly enough. You do need to have an MLS (and three years experience) to supervise a Simmons student, but other library schools have different requirements. The benefits are somewhat immeasurable, and likely to be different for everyone. Here are some of the things I took away from the experience.

First of all, I finally got that other person who really understood what it meant to be a librarian. She had just finished some of the same classes with some of the same instructors I had a few years before. Because the practicum experience is one of the last things students undertake, they have a good understanding of the position even if they don't have any experience as a school librarian. The goal of the practicum is to give them that essential "on-the-job" training before they are off on their own. The two practicums that I completed when I was a student were extremely valuable to me - they are where I learned what it was really like to work in a school, to have real-life students and teachers with whom to interact, and to actually use an automation system rather than read about or hear a sales pitch about one.

Maybe it was those three years of anticipation winning over my impulse to control everything, but I jumped right in and asked Erin's (my intern) opinions of things with which I'd been struggling. Having a new person with a new perspective on things was a definite benefit to supervising an intern. In addition to her perspective, however, I gained a perspective I hadn't expected. Each intern has a faculty supervisor who visits and observes his/her teaching three times throughout the practicum. For me, Erin's supervisor provided a wealth of knowledge that really challenged my thinking. I had never met her before, but her reputation was almost legendary. A friend of mine had worked with her while we were at Simmons and had always raved about the way she did things. She had many years experience as a librarian in a nearby high school. It was a pleasure to work with her in guiding a

student through this learning experience. Because Erin delivered some lessons based on my lesson plans, I got feedback from this veteran library teacher about them (without having to teach them and be observed myself). In essence, I got feedback by proxy. Hearing how these lessons could be improved upon from someone who normally would have no reason to be evaluating my lesson plans was a great added bonus. We also had conversations about the physical layout and feel of the library space. She asked if I'd ever thought about moving the fiction collection to the opposite end of the library. Now, I am the first one to admit that when I walk into a new space, I immediately think about how I would change it around, but that particular change is not one I had thought of. Now, of course, I'm considering it.



[Simmons Graduate School of Library and Information Science](#)

I struggle, as many do, with always having more tasks than time in which to do them. Having an intern may alleviate that because you can delegate things that don't need your personal attention. For example, our orientation needed an overhaul, and I needed some handouts with updated usernames and passwords. Too, I wanted to figure out some new technology tools I'd heard about but hadn't

yet tested. Erin accomplished these tasks and more. I had planned to collaborate with a Latin teacher on a required research project for her Latin III class. Students typically choose an artifact from ancient Rome and do an oral/visual presentation on that artifact. We decided this would be the perfect project to inject with some new technology - and the teacher left the technology part up to me. When Erin started, I described the project to her, told her what I thought would work and introduced her to the Latin teacher. She took on that project from start to finish, choosing different software than I had suggested because it was easier to use. The project was a huge success because I relinquished some control and allowed her to work directly with the teacher and students. The teacher and students were thrilled, and now I am moving on to working with other teachers in the department as well as creating another tech-related project with the Latin teacher (using Google Earth's new Ancient Rome 3D gallery!).

While graduate students are in class, they learn about the current trends within the field. Even though I finished my MLS program only a few years ago, the trends and hot topics have most certainly shifted. Having an intern allows you to learn what the most current trends are – much like attending a conference. If your intern is still in class regularly, you may even have the benefit of having them bring things to their instructor or fellow classmates for opinions or trouble-shooting. If they are well-networked, you get to expand your network into theirs. The new ideas that come from these trends plus the excitement and energy a student possesses are enough to really energize your daily responsibilities and spark great possibilities.

If you're lucky, your intern will have a different area of interest or expertise than you do. I am and have always been a math and science person. Having an intern who has a background in the humanities or language arts is a great benefit to me because I can ask for their opinion of the collection, suggestions for working with classes on those subjects, etc. It's a great thing to have someone around who complements your own knowledge base.

"But there must be reports to write and forms to fill out if I have an intern," you're thinking. "I don't have time for that!" Well, in reality, the amount of time I spent on paperwork was minimal. There were only a handful of formal meetings required. Erin and I had a number of informal meetings to plan and/or coordinate ongoing projects, but the benefits far outweighed the downsides of paperwork and meetings.

If you can give up a little control, provide a little guidance, and allow a potential novice to work on your projects, you are likely to reap some amazing rewards. At the risk of dating myself with an old Alka-Seltzer commercial, this is my advice: "Try it, you'll like it."

*Rochelle Garfinkel is the Library Media Center Director at Frontier Regional High School in Deerfield, MA*

## Using Photo Story to Put a Digital Spin on Projects by Linda Redding and Vicki Wright

Students completing research projects in the Silver Lake Regional School District have put a digital spin on their presentations with the use of Photo Story, a free download from Microsoft. Projects have ranged from public service announcements highlighting topics discussed in health class to book talks to social studies documentary projects.

Collaboration between the classroom teacher and library teacher has been key to the success of the projects. Students spend class time in the library researching their topics and then putting together their Photo Story.

Once the students have completed their research, it's time to map out their Photo Story by completing a storyboard. It is helpful to have students create a storyboard before using Photo Story. The storyboard gives a great visual on how the project will look. Space on the storyboard allows the student to write narration to go along with the picture, making it easier to record the narration when the times come.

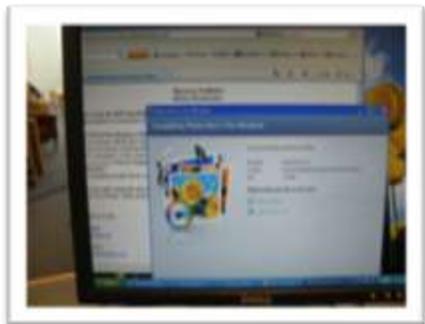


Photo Story takes the students step-by-step through the process of building their project. Students first are directed to load their photos. Pictures may come from the Internet, camera, or scanned. PowerPoint Slides may be saved as jpps and imported into Photo Story too. A good tip is to have the students save all pictures in one folder. Text can be added to any of the pictures and there are choices for font and transitions between each picture. Narration can then be added over pictures and a sound track created using the built in music or by uploading music from another source.

Completed projects can be viewed on the computer, downloaded to a CD, or placed on a flashdrive. They may even be uploaded to a website.

Not only do students find Photo Story a great way to do a presentation, the guidance department at Silver Lake Regional Middle School created their own Photo Story *Middle Ground*. Visit the Silver Lake Regional Middle School's website to see their production created for students and parents to help bridge the transition from elementary school to middle school.



### *Middle Ground*

Sample of a Photo Story created by the SLRMS Guidance Staff <http://www.slrsd.org/slms/>

Photo Story <http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/digitalphotography/photostory/default.msp>

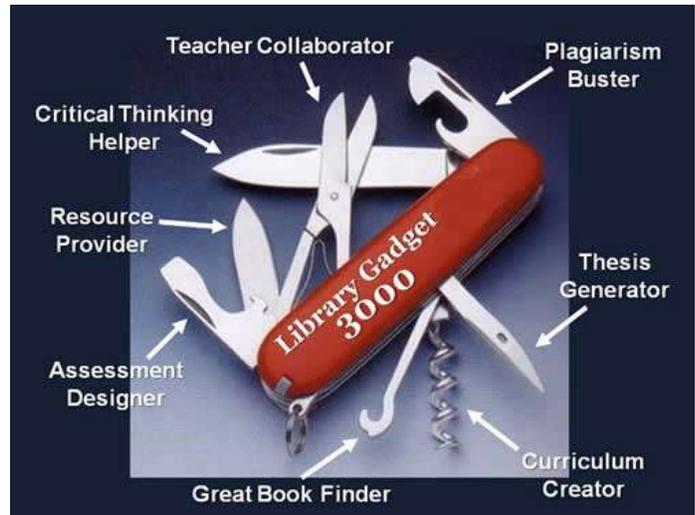
Storyboard Sample <http://www.slrsd.org/slrhs/library/Storyboard.doc>

Gilder Lehrman Institute for American History <http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/seminars1.html>

*Teaching Digital History*, a workshop that explores how to use Photo Story and use documentaries in the classroom, is one of the offerings for the summer of 2009 Linda Redding is the Library Teacher at Silver Lake Regional High School

Vicki Wright is the Library Teacher at Silver Lake Regional Middle School

# The Library Gadget 3000 Commercial: Encouraging Teacher and Librarian Collaboration



Every school librarian knows that collaborating with teachers in the classroom to teach information literacy skills results in increased student achievement. Unfortunately, some teachers are not aware of all that we can do for them. When we have limited time to meet with teachers, how can we educate them as to the many ways a school librarian can help design curriculum and teach information literacy skills?

**The Library Gadget 3000 is the answer!**

Using the Swiss Army knife as a metaphor, this is a four minute commercial parody that explains the different roles school librarians have when collaborating with classroom teachers.

See it online at: <http://library.fayschool.org/Pages/lg3000.htm>

## How was The Library Gadget 3000 commercial created?

1. Digital photos were taken of teachers with a sense of humor.
2. Screenshots were captured using Jing.
3. Both were inserted into a PowerPoint presentation.
4. PowerPoint slides were saved as jpeg's then uploaded to GoAnimate.
5. Audio was recorded using Audacity then uploaded to GoAnimate.
6. The rest of the commercial was created in GoAnimate.

*Laura Beals D'Elia is Librarian at the Fay School, Southborough MA*

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## How Do YOU Read? By Linda Grilli

I am a long time lover of the printed word, especially fiction, but since turning a certain defining age, I have found it increasingly difficult to stay focused and awake in the evenings to satisfy my passion for reading. Luckily, I find new technologies irresistible. I realize that a gray-haired librarian loving technology runs a bit against the stereotype we all love to hate. I am definitely not a Luddite. I pride myself in keeping just a speck ahead on the technology learning curve. It is difficult to maintain that position – it is a bit like the hamster on the wheel; I just keep on running and running to keep ahead of the pack (which in this case is 300 boys).

Working as the only reference librarian and resource at the Roxbury Latin School, I need to stay up to date on current events, politics, history, science, pop culture, sports and current fiction. I have gotten into the habit of dragging home current issues of magazines, newspapers and hard cover fiction and non-fiction. My enthusiasm is always way more than my capability. I find myself lugging it all back and forth, reading little, and grumbling a lot. So (subconsciously I think) I started looking at alternative reading options. I have found some new technologies quite helpful in helping me overcome the challenges I face nightly in meeting my reading goals. They are flexible, easy, and convenient. Yet, they come at a price, and can be expensive.

**Audio books** Audible, ([www.audible.com](http://www.audible.com)) a subsidiary of Amazon, is a leading provider of premium digital spoken audio information and entertainment, available on the Internet. I have started listening to audio books through this internet subscription. Many people already listen to books on tape (checking them out of the library or buying them at a bookstore). Initially, I wasn't all that interested in books on tape. A few years ago I somewhat reluctantly tried this auditory approach by borrowing other people's books on tape. What is different and cool about this online subscription service is I can download a book from my audible account onto my desktop at work, my desktop at home, my laptop or onto an Apple iPhone. Yes, I can listen to an audio book through my phone. I listen either with ear buds or directly from the speaker – perhaps when driving in the car, taking a walk, at the gym, at the airport, in the doctors' office, etc. Just like an iPod or the old fashioned Discman – remember those? I am currently listening to The Appeal by John Grisham on my desktop at school (with headphones). This is what I term a light read and it can be listened to in conjunction with reading my mail, cleaning off my desk, etc. On the iPhone I am listening to Hot, Flat and Crowded Thomas Freidman's newest book. This book is fantastic – in fact if we were to have an all-school read – I would highly recommend this title.



**Wireless Reading Device** But the newest technology gadget I have acquired is the Amazon **Kindle** <http://www.amazon.com/Kindle> an advanced wireless reading device. Again, I kind of went kicking and screaming into this latest format. My beloved book replaced by a journal sized portable electronic reading device? I don't think so. But I gave it a try and I have to say – somewhat reluctantly – I really *like* it. E-books read on electronic reading devices are definitely missing the tactical relationship between reader and the printed book. There is an unmatched quality of the physical book that an e-book can't compete with such as the satisfaction of turning a page in a book and seeing the progression of your reading. E-books should not replace the physical book, but should be in addition to the physical book. There is talk in the library community (especially school libraries) that we need to reinvent ourselves. And technology is helping us do just that. The Kindle works like this: you create an account with Amazon and you can download books, magazines, newspapers or blogs through



## Surviving NEASC by Ann Perham

Writing this article may be a bit premature because I haven't survived...yet. I'm actually just past the midpoint of a two year process that may be the most important experience for my library program and for me as a professional.

**Immersion Learning** It all started in the winter of 2007, when an appeal went out on the MSLA listserv for someone to serve on a NEASC accreditation team visit. I wasn't able to do those dates, but it reminded me that I had promised myself that "I reallyotta" do a visit because my school would be up for accreditation soon. In previous school, I had gone through two accreditations; I had served on a steering committee and had chaired one of the standards committees, but the standards had changed and I needed to reacquaint myself with the 2009 standards. I emailed my principal and before I knew it, I had my choice of two schools and two dates. Pick your poison!



Being on an accreditation team is nothing short of a self-sacrifice, but a worthwhile one. Essentially, I gave away four days of my life. From the time I arrived on Sunday morning until the final meeting on Wednesday, I did nothing but NEASC. "Intense" is the only term that comes close to describing the gathering of information, tours, shadowing of students, discussions and writing of reports. Our team of 16 educators from across New England became fast friends. Many were classroom teachers, two were department heads, and the chair and assistant chair were a superintendent and an assistant superintendent. Would I do it again? Now that I've had a chance to step back a bit, I can say "yes" because of the importance of the process. NEASC prepares the team with plenty of materials to read in advance and ample support during the visit so in some ways it's easier than running a library. *I absolutely recommend that anyone looking at their horizon and seeing NEASC should apply to be on a team ASAP.*

**Backwards Planning** Soon after returning to school, I realized that I had a "bigger picture" of the whole NEASC process. For my library program, I knew exactly what I needed to do to prepare for our own NEASC visit. My faculty was in the process of agreeing on the mission for our school and I had the advantage of having seen how "mission-driven" the NEASC process really is.

Then came the fateful phone call, in May of 2007. It was my principal, inviting me to attend a seminar with the assistant principal on NEASC for schools preparing to go through the self study. Little did I know that I had started down a road that would take me on a journey of leadership. When the assistant principal told me he had an offer I couldn't refuse and asked me to take on the role of co-chair of the steering committee, I was absolutely shocked, but I accepted the challenge.

The fall of 2007 was a series of details, all outlined in a manual from NEASC. From gathering a steering committee to setting up the seven committees, it was detail work that I do well. The team of leaders that we gathered has meshed together quite well. Since our faculty has very few veterans of past NEASC self studies, we have had to learn together.

The Needham High School accreditation visit is November 15-18 of 2009. To date, the faculty has voted to accept one of the standards reports and we have six more to go, with a completion goal of May. We have our hotel lined up to house the team, a budget, and a to-do list that is long but do-able.

**Midstream Wisdom** Do I have advice for library teachers anticipating their own accreditation?

FIRST and foremost: *Continue to run your quality program.* If you have shortcomings, recognize them and know that the NEASC self study is the opportunity to have the strength of recommendations from an outside authority.

*Read the standards for your year* – make neasc.org a favorite on your browser. The chart at the end of this article compares the standards of 2009 with 2011, but the points of emphasis are obvious. When I studied the standards, the emphasis on the embedding of the information literacy curriculum was clear. I undertook a year-

long study of projects in the library, charting our information literacy curriculum indicators – which were introduced, which were reinforced. This document is strong evidence for our self study.

STATISTICS are important evidence, although not the only evidence. I have always kept statistics, so I am able to show changes over time as well as verify access of students and classes to the library.

Ongoing ASSESSMENT is a cornerstone of the 2011 indicators. The draft calls for us to “conduct ongoing assessment, using relevant data including feedback from the school community to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school’s 21st century learning expectations.” It’s all about the evidence of learning.



A huge lack in the NEASC accreditation is their failure to assess technology and its importance in the School

Resources/Library Standard 6. When I called it to the attention of our subcommittee assessing the library, they were amazed that they had completely left out our instructional technology program because the indicators specify library with only glancing mention of “technologies”. Software and hardware is mentioned, but there needs to be more emphasis on the use of technology as a learning tool. In the Instruction Standard, the use of technology plays a role. In the Instruction Standard, there should be more emphasis of using inquiry methods of instruction and developing intellectual curiosity through research.

I have compared the 2009 standards and the draft of the 2011 standards in the chart, at the end of this article. The library is still in School Resources, but I don’t see that we have lost any importance. The redundancy of Standard 6 has been banished and once the indicators are fleshed out, I have hope that they will be clearer than the 2011. The emphasis on evidence-based practice and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills is very positive for school libraries.

## **Job Alike: NEASC – Preparing, surviving** *(From the 2008 Conference, High School Job Alike)*

At our 2008 Conference, a special feature on Sunday evening was the Job Alikes. I facilitated the high school session in a “round robin roundtable” format and posed three focus questions. “*NEASC: How do you prepare and survive?*” was one of the topics.

This is the advice offered:

- Independent and Public schools are all under NEASC, just different departments/divisions
- Best thing to prepare for your own accreditation is to volunteer to be on a visiting accreditation team.
- It is long hours, but rewarding – a superior professional development activity (for which you DO receive PDPs)
- volunteer to be on a visiting committee to know what to expect as soon as you can, even if your visit is three years away; allows you to plan and change your practice if need be
- To Serve on a NEASC Team contact your principal or call Janet Allison at NEASC to be on a team
- Self study is an intense year
- Try to be on your steering committee. Be a leader for your school, position of visibility
- Use school Professional Development Time for NEASC – great way to bring staff together
- Try to ensure that all depts are represented on all committees
- Gather your evidence required by NEASC: look at standards
- Evidence Binder: Quantify what you are doing- collect collaborative lessons along with circ stats., extra evidence including book talks, tutoring, what available for the kids.
- Do your homework.... look at the standards
- Don’t write your own report; (rough draft?) but holds more veracity if someone else does it.
- The School Resources committee should be a diverse group
- never hide anything; NEASC is a library’s best advocate
- Stick to the facts as committee will find out anyway
- The NEASC Rubric to decide adherence to the standard is difficult to use, but it does work
- Standard - Indicators are very specific and the evidence will speak for itself
- It’s not about ‘you’... the committee takes a look at the ‘program’ so that library can do/be offered to do (financial, staffing, etc) what needs to be done
- Get Statistics, “anyone can talk, but the data speaks”
- Take lots of time to prepare
- For the accreditation visit, offer library for meeting space to the Accreditation Team so NEASC can see library in action and see what materials are there
- NEASC best protector for the professional library position
- From the NEASC recommendations needed help for your program (such as library support staff) may come.

# MSLA Forum: Winter 2009

| 2009 Standards                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 2011 Standards                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Standard 1: Mission and Expectations for Student Learning</b></p> <p>The school's mission statement describes the essence of what the school as a community of learners is seeking to achieve. The expectations for student learning are based on and drawn from the school's mission statement. These expectations are the fundamental goals by which the school continually assesses the effectiveness of the teaching and learning process. Every component of the school community must focus on enabling all students to achieve the school's expectations for student learning.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | <p><b>Standard 1: Core Values, Beliefs and Learning Expectations</b></p> <p>Effective schools maintain an appropriate focus by identifying core values and beliefs about learning that function as explicit foundational commitments to students and the community. Decision-making remains focused on and aligned with these critical commitments. <b>Core values and beliefs manifest themselves in school-wide 21st century learning expectations.</b> Every component of the school is driven by the core values and beliefs and supports all students' achievement of the school's learning expectations.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| <p><b>Teaching and Learning Standard 2: Curriculum</b></p> <p>7. Instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, staffing levels, and the resources of the library/media center shall be sufficient to allow for the implementation of the curriculum.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <p><b>Standard 2: Curriculum</b></p> <p>Staffing levels, instructional materials, technology, equipment, supplies, facilities, and the resources of the library/media center are sufficient to fully implement the curriculum, including the co-curricular programs and other learning opportunities.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <p><b>Support Standard 6: School Resources for Learning</b></p> <p>All Student Support Services:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The school's student support services shall be consistent with the school's mission and expectations for student learning.</li> <li>2. The school shall allocate resources, programs, services so all students have equal opportunity to achieve the school's expectations for student learning.</li> <li>3. Student support personnel shall enhance student learning by interacting and working cooperatively with professional and other staff and by utilizing community resources to address the academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of students.</li> <li>4. All student support services shall be regularly evaluated and revised to support improved student learning.</li> <li>5. There shall be a system for effective, ongoing communication with students, parents/guardians, school personnel, designed to keep them informed about the types of available student support services and identified student needs.</li> <li>6. Student records, including health and immunization records, shall be maintained in a confidential, secure manner consistent w/ federal, state law.</li> <li>7. There shall be sufficient certified/licensed personnel and support staff to provide effective counseling, health, special education, library media services.</li> </ol> | <p><b>Standard 6: School Resources for Learning</b></p> <p>Student learning and well-being are dependent upon adequate and appropriate support. The school is responsible for providing an effective range of coordinated programs and services. These resources enhance and improve student learning and well-being and support the school's core values and beliefs. Student support services enable each student to achieve the school's 21<sup>st</sup> century learning expectations.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| <p><b>Library Information Services:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10. The library/information services program and materials shall be fully integrated into the school's curriculum and instructional program.</li> <li>11. Library/information services personnel shall be knowledgeable about the curriculum and support its implementation.</li> <li>12. A wide range of materials, technologies, and other library/information services that are responsive to the school's student population shall be available to students and faculty and utilized to improve teaching and learning.</li> <li>13. Students, faculty, and support staff shall have regular and frequent access to library/information services, facilities, and programs as an integral part of their educational experience before, during, and after the school day.</li> <li>14. The library/information services program shall foster independent inquiry by enabling students and faculty to use various school and community information resources and technologies.</li> <li>15. Policies shall be in place for the selection and removal of information resources and the use of technologies and the Internet.</li> </ol>                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <p><b>Library Information Services:</b></p> <p>Library/information services have adequate, certified/licensed personnel and support staff who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are actively engaged in the implementation of the school's curriculum</li> <li>• provide a wide range of materials, technologies, and other information services in support of the school's curriculum</li> <li>• ensure that the facility is available and staffed for students and staff before, during, and after school</li> <li>• are responsive to students' interests and needs in order to support independent learning</li> <li>• <b>conduct ongoing assessment, using relevant data including feedback from the school community to improve services and ensure each student achieves the school's 21st century learning expectations</b></li> </ul> |

*Ann Perham has been the Library Teacher at Needham High School since 2000 and is co-chairperson of the NEASC steering committee. She is a past president of MSLA and has been on the Executive Board for a decade. Ann is the Director-Elect for AASL Region I and will begin her 2-year term as Director in June of 2009.*

## Hats off to Diane Libbey! by Sandy Kelly



**Congratulations to our Central Area Co Director, Diane Libbey.** Diane accepted a 2008 MassCUE Webbie Award at their annual conference dinner on Wednesday November 18<sup>th</sup>. Diane is the Library Teacher at Westborough High School.

In 2007, MassCUE launched its recognition of excellence in school web site design at the classroom, building and district level through its first annual Webbie Awards

program. More than 89 sites were reviewed in 2008 including "department" sites. All nominated sites were provided with feedback, and given a Webbie seal of participation for being reviewed.



Each site's content is reviewed in the area of ownership, disclosure, audience, content, and functionality. *Ownership* demonstrates that the site is regularly updated while *disclosure* clearly identifies and shares information including contact info, a feedback link, date updated, privacy and terms of use statements and a disclaimer regarding links to educationally viable commercially developed content. In regards to *audience*, the site should clearly demonstrate awareness of age and reading levels and needs and interests of users. *Content* should not include commercial links or endorsements or inappropriate information.

One area that may be new to MSLA members is *functionality*. Do you have interactive tools to customize your users' experience? Diane's site links to a book blog, the regional CWMARS OPAC, and even a link to subscribe to the site. If you would like to evaluate your own school library website take a look at the 2008 MassCUE Webbie Awards Scoring Rubric at <http://masscue.org/webbies/2008/department.html>.

*Sandy Kelly is the Library Teacher at the Carlisle Elementary School and president of MSLA*



## Lunch with an Author - Author Update by Linda Redding

Here is some news about two authors that were featured in "Lunch with an Author" articles in earlier issues of the MSLA Forum.

**Maryellen Maguire-Eisen**, the executive director of the Children's Melanoma Foundation, received the prestigious American Academy of Dermatology Gold Triangle Award for the **books** *Pretty Prom* and *Lake Vacation*. Both books she authored with Mary Mills Barrow, co-founder of Coolibar. Barrow and Maguire-Eisen wrote the two books to empower teens and adolescents with reliable dermatological information about the dangers of overexposure to ultraviolet radiation. The award is presented each year by the American Dermatology Association. Visit the Children's Melanoma Foundation website for more information. <http://www.melanomaprevention.org/>

**Barbara Larmon Failing** has moved to Ketchikan, Alaska. She is launching an exciting interactive teen summer reading project **Blog Book 2009**. On June 1, 2009, she will publish her teen novel, *Loulane Lambert's Lists for Life* on its own blog. The book is written as a journal, so each day (for about 2 months), she'll post a portion of the book as she journeys from Cape Cod to Alaska. Teens can interact with the book with their comments.

Several years ago, she was the recipient of an award by the Plymouth County Education Association for her "Raising Readers" Family Author Night presentation in Kingston.

*Linda Redding is Library Teacher at Silver Lake Regional High School*

## Massachusetts Teen Choice Book Award by Donna Deegan

The Massachusetts Teen Choice Book Award was created as a response to the need to honor and recognize new Young Adult fiction. Modeled after the Rhode Island Teen Book Award, this award gives teen the opportunity to vote for their favorite YA author. Sue-Ellen Szymanski and Mary Ann Rogers met several times with MLA/YSS and MSLA in order to create an award which will be a joint venture between MLA and MSLA.



“I wanted to give teens a chance to voice their opinion on whom they felt was the best YA author,” said Mary Ann Rogers, a library media specialist in Billerica, MA. The committee consists of public and school librarians. Reading specialists and teachers are also welcome to join. The Massachusetts Library Association and the Massachusetts School Library Association will sponsor the award. The committee will meet once a month on the last Monday of the month. Each member will be responsible to read between 10-15 YA fiction titles that have been published in the last year. Each book will be rated from 1-10 by the members. A final list is then compiled and a ballot is then created.

Several public and school librarians attended the initial meeting at the John Glenn Middle School in Bedford: Donna Deegan, Mary Ann Rogers, Joan Collins, Sue Ellen Szymanski, Sarah Sogigian and Tricia London. The group drafted by-laws and discussed the goal of ensuring nominations of interest for both middle and high school teens. They may appear in separate sections of the ballot.



“We want to find the best possible fiction that has been or will be published this year,” said Rogers. We hope to read advance copies of titles that will be coming out in 2009. Once the list is compiled, a ballot will be ready for late fall. The voting will take place from the fall of 2009 to the spring of 2010.

“We encourage any public or school librarian who is interested in YA fiction to join the committee,” said Rogers. Hoping to attract librarians from all parts of the state, the committee voted to conduct some virtual meetings and to rotate physical meetings throughout the regions. Plans are for a virtual meeting in January, a February meeting in Milbury and the March 30<sup>th</sup> meeting in the Northeast Region. The committee also hopes to create some positions, such as webmaster, for those who would like to participate but cannot travel to monthly meetings in person. Contact Mary Ann Rogers if you are interested in joining this new award committee. [mrogers@billerica.k12.ma.us](mailto:mrogers@billerica.k12.ma.us)

### Massachusetts Teen Choice Book Awards Nominee Requirements

In order to be eligible as a nominee for the Massachusetts Teen Choice Book Award, books must conform to the following:

1. The book must be of interest to teens between the ages of 12 and 18 years old.
2. The book must be published within one year of the creation of the nominee list. For example, nominees for the 2010 award were selected in 2009. They had to have a publication date of 2009.
3. The primary consideration of book selection should be quality, but the level of young adult interest should also be considered. This means that adult novels with a *high level* of teen interest may also be nominated.
4. There are no restrictions based on home country of the author or whether the author is still living.

*Donna Deegan is the Library Teacher at Lynn Classical High School in Lynn MA*

## Members in the News

Kudos to **Laurie Dias-Mitchell**, named as one of the Dartmouth Women of the Year. Check out the article about Laurie and her achievements through this link to the South Coast Today newspaper.

“Dartmouth Women of the Year: Francisco, Dias-Mitchell teach students the value of community service”

<http://www.southcoasttoday.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008812230358>

**Valerie Diggs** and the Chelmsford High School Learning Commons made the Boston Globe December 8, 2009:

[http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2008/12/08/new\\_learning\\_commons\\_defies\\_commonplace/](http://www.boston.com/news/local/massachusetts/articles/2008/12/08/new_learning_commons_defies_commonplace/)

## Greetings from the Editors

“Thank You” to all who have been so patient and helpful in composing this Winter Forum. This edition is much later than we had originally planned, and – although there is no single reason for its delay – we are committed to avoiding any delays for the Spring Forum.

As we embrace 2009, it is a year that signifies historic changes. President Obama will be addressing a number of issues, including the economy, the environment, and education. His decisions, and those of his cabinet, will be the focus of an improvement plan for all.

Our year-long focus for the Forum will follow the bookmark’s theme of “School Libraries: Learning for Life.” This will also address improvement in education, and how we, through our students, can make a difference in the future of our country. As we enter 2009, whether it’s our first year or our year to retire, every one of us has an impact on our students. How we choose to help shape the lives of our future-makers is up to us. We are living in a 21<sup>st</sup> Century world and the opportunities are infinite. Teaching and encouraging our children will make the difference, and that’s our role.

*Thanks to all of you. We welcome your ideas and articles, and wish you a great 2009!*

Patsy Divver & Jan Kolezsar, co-editors, MSLA Forum



*Patsy Divver is Library Teacher at the Millis Senior/Middle School*



*Jan Kolezsar is a retired Library Teacher*