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on the cover
Louisiana Beauty
by Patricia Brown
The conclusion of each journal volume and association year brings recollection of what has been accomplished and considerations of future possibilities. The Louisiana Library Association is experiencing a moment of that consideration as we examine the best ways to go forward serving the communities, libraries, library workers, and librarians throughout our state. During this year, the governance of our association has been discussed, and the membership’s opinions have been sought. I implore each person reading this journal to consider what you believe the future of the Louisiana Library Association should be and help make that vision possible: contact your section representative, the members of the Executive Board, me. Invite new librarians, transplants, and students to play an active role; vote when the opportunity arises; volunteer when you are able. We all have the honor and the responsibility of supporting each individual and organization serving the information needs of our state. The Louisiana Library Association provides a framework for this support, but that work can’t continue without active and engaged members. You are the future of the association, responsible for the future of libraries in our state.
Dear LLA colleagues, supporters, and readers,

Splendid speeches, scrumptious catering, thought-provoking programs, the blue owl mascot, a little live owl!, vibrant vendors and exhibits, after-hours fun talking with colleagues and friends—this was the 92nd annual conference, Wisdom and Wonder in Louisiana Libraries. Whether you were with us in Alexandria or not, read about it in this conference issue of Louisiana Libraries.

My favorite moments:

• watching librarians and authors honored at the Awards Ceremony;
• celebrating after the Awards Ceremony with Benjamin Richey’s guitar music, the a cappella Highs and Lows from Alexandria Senior High School, and great salad and pasta;
• visiting the Resident Raptors from LSU’s Wildlife Hospital;
• reconnecting with my best friend from high school at the Pelican Publishing booth, as she autographed her latest children’s book;
• noticing the relaxed, cheerful faces of those in attendance having a professional good time. “Laissez le bon temps bibliothecaire roulez!”
• hearing Dayne Sherman talk about how to advocate for libraries with a smile.

Sherman’s talk inspired me to look up Gene Sharp’s work on nonviolent action. Copies online were either very expensive or in barely acceptable condition, but I found The Politics of Nonviolent Action at Watson Library. (JC 326.3 S45 1973 in the NSU Libraries catalog.) It is a comprehensive study of political nonviolence theory and application in the twentieth century. Part Two lists and illustrates all 198 methods that Sherman referred to, and the book’s detailed table of contents is worth a look by those looking for other ways to accomplish our stated goal of performing “the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources”—print, online, and human. (From page 19 of the 2015 LLA Manual, https://llaonline.org/Documents/2015_LLA_Manual.pdf)

I’ve enjoyed presiding over LLA this year. Now we’re back in our regular grind, using what we discovered and what we reenergized in Alexandria. Are you going to ALA in New Orleans in June? Celise Reech-Harper and Sonnet Ireland have made some “I Love LLA” ribbons to wear.

Read and be wise,

Patricia Brown
Alma Dawson, professor emeritus of School of Library and Information Science at Louisiana State University, was featured in the January/February issue of American Libraries as a pioneering African-American librarian.

Kathleen Bloomingdale is the new library associate at Louisiana State University Health Shreveport. She will serve as the library’s business manager and will also cross-train to help in other sections of the library. Ms. Bloomingdale holds a BS in Computer Science from LSU – Shreveport, and she has worked at LSU Health Shreveport for almost 15 years.

Paula Craig, head librarian of Northwestern State University College of Nursing and School of Allied Health, is the recipient of the Nursing and Allied Health Resources Section (NAHRS) Award for Professional Excellence. This award was established in 1994 to recognize a member who exhibits outstanding leadership and exceptional librarianship in meeting the information needs of nursing and allied health professionals. NAHRS is a section of the Medical Library Association.

Dave Comeaux is the new systems and discovery librarian for the LSU Libraries, managing the support of the ILS and the discovery system and serving as LSU primary liaison to LOUIS. Comeaux has been with the LSU Libraries since 2014.

Jacob Fontenot is the new head of the interlibrary loan department (ILL). Fontenot is a familiar face at the Libraries, having worked in ILL since 2013.

Amanda Hawk has joined the faculty as special collections head of public & research services. Prior to accepting her new position, Hawk worked as a special collections archivist and athletics archivist at the University of Maryland at College Park. She began her career as a public services assistant at Princeton’s Mudd Manuscript Library.

Matthew Jordan has joined as technical services cataloging associate in special collections.

Scott Ziegler is the new head of digital programs and services in technology initiatives. Ziegler previously served as the head of technology at the American Philosophical Society and has an MA in Philosophy from LSU and an MS in Library and Information Science from Drexel University. He is a certified archivist.

Remembrances

LSU Libraries is saddened to note the passing of Dr. Stephen J. Bensman on Thursday, January 4, 2018. Bensman worked for 37 years for LSU Libraries in a variety of positions, most significantly as bibliographer for the social sciences and cataloging librarian, before retiring from the library in 2015.

Please send contributions for the People Column to mdobbi@lsuhsc.edu.
When asked if they would be interested in partnering with a local non-profit to create an exhibit for a festival, Clare Coleman and Megan Thomas of Calcasieu Parish Public Library were hesitant. They had never undertaken a project like this before and would have less than three months to complete it, not to mention other projects and renovations they were working on. But in true librarian fashion, they agreed to take on the project. In a span of three months, Tablet to Tablet: A History of the Written Word evolved from an abstract idea to a museum quality traveling exhibit that has been featured at three festivals, ten locations, and is booked for eleven more.

The project’s concept came from Common Ground, a Lake Charles non-profit that celebrates the diversity and multiculturalism of Southwest Louisiana. They host Culture Fest, a yearly festival in October that features booths, performances, and food from around the world. In 2015, Common Ground decided they wanted an educational element to Culture Fest, hence reaching out to the library. They wanted to educate the public about the history of the written word and to celebrate books from around the world.

Enter Clare and Megan, SLIS grads from LSU with undergrads in History and ZERO experience in creating exhibits. “To be honest, I don’t think Megan or I envisioned such a large exhibit at the beginning. We were just thinking about info placards on a table next to objects and images,” said Clare. The Common Ground committee, however, dreamed big and promised to finance whatever we could design so the team got to work.

This team included seven people (three of which were born in other countries: India, Pakistan, and Tanzania). With the concept of “history of books” as their goal, Clare and Megan began to research and soon a structure for the exhibit began to evolve. Two “lightbulb” moments pushed the project forward: when Clare discovered an archived “History of the Book” exhibit at St. Thomas University (Florida) which chronicled different formats and when Megan came up with the title Tablet to Tablet. “We decided to focus on the format itself, hoping this would allow us more flexibility in showing how different cultures throughout history have found ways to communicate,” said Megan “and we liked being able to connect the past with the present.”

From the beginning, they knew they wanted something that would have a life past the event, so a portable exhibit was definitely needed. The library had worked with local artist Erik Jessen on a previous project, so he was happy to join the team when asked. He would be responsible for the graphic design as long as Clare and Megan provided the content and structure. This presented the first hurdle to Clare and Megan: how to gather multi-media information, sort through it, and arrange it in a way where the team could work on the project at any time and anywhere. “We realized that with so little time, we needed to be able to work on the project almost daily. We both had vacations scheduled during the time and we needed a way to keep going even when we weren’t at work,” said Megan. Google was the obvious choice for the librarians, and so they created shared folders in Google Drive, which provided everything they needed to successfully collaborate with a busy, inter-agency team.

They divided the exhibit into ten panels, the first being an introduction and the remaining nine comprising the following categories: stone tablets, early mediums, papyrus, codex, printing, children’s books, audiobooks and ebooks. Clare and Megan created folders for each category and members

Inaugural exhibit at Culture Fest 2015
uploaded their research. Once they had enough content, Clare and Megan began the painstaking process of selecting the best content, editing it, and writing text to correspond with the images. They used Google Slides to share the final content with the artist, who then took their content and designed the final panels. “As Erik was designing the panels, he would share his work via Google Drive and it was exciting to see his process! I found myself checking my phone late at night to see if he’d added anything new that day,” said Clare.

Seeing the content in Google Slides gave Clare and Megan the idea of creating a digital exhibit, and so they did. The digital version made everyone in the team happy because it allowed them to share all the information they had collected, even the content that didn’t fit on the final exhibit panels. This “supplemental material” also found its way into the inaugural exhibit, which included posters, loaned objects, and interactive activities. “The first time we displayed the exhibit at Culture Fest, it was HUGE! It was in a 4,600 square foot space with 13 foot ceilings and we used every bit of that room,” said Clare. [The digital exhibit is still available from the Calcasieu Parish Public Library website.]

Another challenge was getting community involvement. The team wanted to create a “World of Books” that displayed books from around the world that had an impact on community members’ lives. Clare and Megan used different ventures to garner community participation. Ranging from television appearances to social media requests for community suggestions, the ideas were pitched to a wide audience for two months. The efforts fell flat. “We were surprised by the lack of response,” said Megan, “We have an actively involved community yet no one seemed to bite the bait!” The team was committed, however, so they researched and reached out to others to create a list of 100 books that they felt had the most impact on humanity. They printed full cover book jackets of each title with brief text about why it was chosen, divided them into global regions, and displayed them on tables decorated to represent each region. Volunteers were available in this section of the exhibit to encourage dialog, asking attendees what titles they thought should be on the tables. At later exhibitions, a poster was displayed near a wall of these titles that asked people to write their suggestions.

Once the exhibit debuted, the community responded. Clare and Megan struggled to field all the questions and feedback. People approached them with ideas, anecdotes, and personal items that related to the topic. “One of the local radio station owners came to us with an exact mini replica of the original Gutenberg press. He offered to loan it to us for the next exhibit location, where it became a big hit with people who visited that location,” said Megan. Personal books were also brought to the librarians; community members wanted to talk about how their personal item had an impact on their love of reading. “Even though this part of the exhibit hasn’t traveled, it was the most rewarding part for me because I loved seeing people respond to what books were important to them and why,” said Clare, “and it was a pivotal learning point for us. The community needed to visualize the concept before they could fully embrace the exhibit and give their input. We’ve used this knowledge in the community-centered exhibits that we’ve created since.”

After a session at LLA 2016, the librarians started booking it for exhibitions outside the parish. Three
parishes booked from the LLA session: St. Tammany Parish, Allen Parish, and Tangipahoa Parish and they were critical to the start of Tablet to Tablet’s life as a traveling exhibit. Clare and Megan perfected the skills needed to schedule, support, and transport the exhibit. By 2018, they were able to dedicate more time and energy towards garnering interest and encouraging bookings rather than working out logistics. They took the full exhibit to LLA 2018 with an empty calendar and returned with nine months worth of bookings. “We knew that displaying the entire exhibit at LLA would garner a lot of attention and interest, but we did not expect the high praise or the exclamations of disbelief that two librarians had created such a museum quality exhibit without any previous experience. Our peers’ reactions made every hectic moment worth it,” Megan said.

Tablet to Tablet: A History of the Written Word is available for free to any library or organization in Louisiana and there are currently openings for 2019. Contact Megan Thomas (mthomas@calcasieulibrary.org) if you are interested in scheduling this exhibit.

Clare Coleman, Central Library Branch Manager
Megan Thomas, Central Library Programming Supervisor

Calcasieu Parish Public Library
Louisiana Talks

Interview with Poet Anne Babson

Biography
Anne Babson’s poetry collection *The White Trash* Pantheon won the Colby H. Kullman prize from the Southern Writers Southern Writing Conference in Oxford, Mississippi. Her latest collection, *Polite Occasions* just got accepted by Unsolicited Press on the West Coast. She wrote the libretto for the opera *Lotus Lives*, which has been performed in multiple cities and is slated for production once more in Montreal in 2018. She is the author of three chapbooks—*Poems Under Surveillance* is still in print with Finishing Line Press, and she has a forthcoming chapbook from Dancing Girl Press entitled *Dolly Shot*. She has been anthologized in the United States and in England, most recently in the notable collection *Nasty Women Poets: An Unapologetic Anthology of Subversive Verse* released in 2017. Her work has appeared in literary journals on five continents and has won numerous editorial awards. She has been nominated for the Pushcart Prize four times. She has received residency grants from Yaddo and Vermont Studio Center. Her blog about moving South, *The Carpetbaggers Journal*, has close to 50,000 hits and has been picked up by *Y'all Politics* and PBS-related websites. She writes lyrics for musical projects, most recently a blues album. She teaches writing and literature at Southeastern Louisiana University. She writes and lives in New Orleans.

Interview

*Louisiana Libraries*: What hath Brooklyn to do with Oxford, Mississippi?

Anne Babson: You ask me to explain to you the path of my life, how I became a Southern writer. I don’t blame you. I may indeed be the first Southern writer not born one but one who defected South. While steamboat traffic on the Mississippi goes both directions, literally, I am anomalous.

The language of the streets of New York is exquisitely particolored. I always loved and liked to write about the sound of New Yorkers talking on the street. But as a child, or as a young adult, when I cracked open a book, more often than not, it was a French author or a Southern author—writers like Philip Roth were too neurotic for my tastes. And Melville? Don’t get me started. I freaking hate that white whale!

When I was a senior in high school, I was caught by my English teacher scribbling secretly during her lecture on *Moby Dick*, and since I wasn’t responding to anything she said, she assumed I was passing notes. She asked me to stand up and read aloud to the class what I was writing. I stood up with my notebook and read two paragraphs of a paper I was writing for my own enjoyment—about how all the older female characters in Tennessee Williams’ plays resembled his real-life mother as depicted in his memoirs, which I had read the year before. She told me I could sit down.

I had inhabited those plays. I had a complicated passion for *Gone with the Wind*, too. It took me years of life to realize the character I resemble most in that book is Rhett Butler. I swagger. I am unapologetic and direct when I speak. I have suspicious Yankee ties. And frankly, my dear—. It’s not that I am a drag king. It’s that Rhett Butler is a female invention, Margaret Mitchell’s idea of a man who could seduce and love her hardened heroine. I am straight, but I see no reason (like Rhett wouldn’t) to pretend to be the belle of five counties. That’s the REAL drag show, performed by women for men, who often have no idea who the women around them really are.

I studied fiction for a year at Sarah Lawrence College with Allan Gurganus, who wrote *The Oldest Living Confederate Widow Tells All*. By that time, I had already understood many of the themes and concerns of Southern writing, and I am struck that he taught us by making us read only a few Southern authors. We read more Russian authors than Southern ones, which any careful reader of Faulkner may understand might actually be a traditional Southern approach to writing.
I visited Mississippi for the first time about a decade ago, having read Twain’s non-fictional account of his time as a steamboat pilot. I wanted to see the landscape he described. Having lived so long in Southern books, I wanted to see the South in something other than print. In Vicksburg, Mississippi, I went to a coffee shop at the start of the Blues Highway, and there I saw two chemists playing chess. I had a green tea latte and talked to them. One of them offered to show me around while I was visiting, took vacation days to drive me to historic homes in Louisiana.

Driving in central Louisiana, we went up the white gravel driveway of a small antebellum home. I had never seen Spanish moss before. I felt suddenly I was in the pages of one of my beloved books. A lady walking a pug on a pink leash and wearing a lot of rhinestones considering it was only ten o’clock in the morning came up and said in a Williamsesque drawl, “I am terribly sorry, but we simply aren’t receiving visitors today. You see, there are workmen putting up new tiles in the portico, and we simply cannot receive today. We hope you will visit us another time.”

I understood—Williams didn’t find himself in a land of troubled goddesses. He found himself in a world with ordinary Southern people whom he rendered heroic in order to write what was in his heart. I was standing right then in a potential 21st-century Tennessee Williams play, and if it were to be written, it was up to me to write it, since I was the one who saw it, and Tennessee had long-since choked on a chicken bone.

When the chemist asked if he could stay in touch, I agreed. We dated long distance for about a year. He proposed to me on one knee on the banks of the Mississippi. We married in the mansion that had served as Yankee headquarters during the Siege of Vicksburg. We consummated our marriage in a bed once occupied by Ulysses S. Grant.

I became a Southern writer long after becoming a reader of Southerners. I became a Southern bride. I became a Southern taxpayer and voter. I wrote about what I saw and heard. And it really wasn’t as big a change as many might imagine. A good writer always situates himself or herself adjacent to the potentially mythic (like that rhinestone-spangled pug walker mentioned above), wherever he or she lives. In Brooklyn, I found poetic prosody in the staccato conjugations of the F-word under my window when the neighbors were noisy. In Oxford, I found a different but equally urgent prosody in the hoop of the Pentecostal sermon. I hear it all as call and response.

Here. Let me show you. Behold two different regional calls and responses:

**BROOKLYN:**

* A drunk stands under a window in Coney Island at 3 am, shouting.
  * Call: “Hey, Gina! Gina! GinAAAAA! It’s me! It’s me!”
  * Response (windows opening all over): “F#ck you!”
  * “We f#cking know it’s you!”
  * “Gina don’t want you, you f#ck!”
  * “Shut the f#ck up, you f#cking f#ck! It’s three in the f#cking morning! Go home!”

**OXFORD:**

* A sober man stands at a pulpit on Sunday afternoon, shouting.
  * Call: “Now Goliath—huh! He thought he was a giant—huh! But God—”
  * Response: “Yes, God!”
  * “Preach it!”
  * “Tell the truth!”
  * Call: “But God—huh! God had another point of view!”
  * Response: “Amen!”
  * “Amen!”

You see? Both towns have something important to say about the intersection of the vernacular and the American experience. Both are glorious in their venality, both humble in their grand American melody. I am in love with both and dance to both.

Years ago, in an interview for *New York Newsday*, I said my life’s ambition as a writer was “To stretch the American language to include as many kinds of voices as possible in the literary canon.” I am still on that mission, incorporating music of passionate and unpretentious speakers into my verses.

*Louisiana Libraries:* Your background as a New Yorker has served you well as a Southern poet, has it not?

*Anne Babson:* Every New York writer learns to eavesdrop on interesting conversations in public places and to make art of it. In the South, where your mommas all raise you right, you learn that
Eavesdropping is rude and ought not be done in polite society. New Yorkers learn that in a town where we are stuffed in subway cars together, there is no such thing as a private conversation, and people feel free to chime in after listening attentively. Nobody on the A train thinks this is rude. It is part of New York living.

Perhaps that is what I have done here. I moved South and started listening very carefully to people talking, and then I chimed in. You all were too polite to tell me to pipe down.

Louisiana Libraries: You recently read from your work at the Louisiana Book Festival along with the writers of *Nasty Women Poets: An Unapologetic Anthology of Subversive Verse*. How does the political fit into your writing?

Anne Babson: The very act of any woman speaking, writing and publishing is still new enough to be subversive. Look at the floor censure about a year ago of Senator Elizabeth Warren in the debate during Jeff Sessions’ confirmation hearing for Attorney General.

The majority leader censured her on the floor for dissenting. While men dissented as well, he only censured a woman. He said, of her refusal to shut up, “She was warned. She was given an explanation. Nevertheless, she persisted.”

Any woman who challenges the status quo with her words, who refuses patronizing explanations designed to hush her into ladylike submission, her words are political. I am no exception. Poet Sonia Sanchez said (I paraphrase) that all poets either reinforce the status quo or challenge it. I agree with Sanchez and believe it is the role of the poet to call attention to the underexamined, to lend power to potentially subversive perspectives.

I can say of my own writing that I, too, have been warned. For my discussion of voting rights of people of color I received a death threat by white supremacists not long ago that had my local police department recommending I purchase a firearm—but the pen is mightier than the sword. God knows I, too, have been given an explanation as to why my subject matter is trivial or wrong—one might even say I have been given a “mansplanation.” Nevertheless, I persist. I write about immigrants, about poor people, about race, about women’s perspectives that diverge from men’s perspectives. I persist. I keep trying to imbue American experiences with elements of the eternal divine in my verses. I persist. I keep loving America for its disagreements, its contradictions, its neuroses, its wrestling match with destiny, its fear of its own shadow, giving us weeks more of winter. I am an American writer, persistent and unrepentant. Everything I say is political.

Louisiana Libraries: Do you find any poetry right now in American politics?

Anne Babson: There is a funny passage in Adams’ *Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy* series depicting a certain race of aliens that tortures its captives with its poetry. I experience the prosody of Trump’s speech in this manner. All I can think at every repetition of “bigly” is “Dear God, make it stop!”

But I tell you something more affirmational that I find poetic. I listen to a good number of podcasts these days, and on one, *Pod Save America*, the hosts did a live show before a surprisingly large crowd in Virginia shortly before the recent election there. They interviewed local candidates, and at one point, they asked people in the crowd what they were going to do to get these Democratic outsiders elected. Hundreds of them one-by-one pledged into the podcast microphone to knock on doors, hand out leaflets, make calls, offer lawn signs to residents all over the state. Their choir of voices in unison made me weep.

Surely this last year has provided American thinkers with moral clarity. It has asked us what we really believe is right, what we value, whom we believe deserves respect. We have had to pick sides, because not picking a side was a guarantor that another side would steamroll over vulnerable people. We have shown others who we really are. Do we stand? Do we kneel? Do we stage a walk-out? We are all more clearly living out who we really are. We are collectively wrestling for the soul of America. Where we show the courage of our convictions, in my view, we are lyricists to a new national anthem. Will it resemble *Deutschland Uber Alles*, or will it sound like a new tune by Woody Guthrie? The choice is ours.

This in fact is at the heart of my forthcoming (from Unsolicited Press) collection for a book entitled *Polite Occasions*, which imagines an American landscape where the elites seem to have an unnamed
cultural and moral dilemma. The collection writes back to the Book of Revelation and also to Emily Post’s 1922 *Etiquette in Society, in Business, in Politics and at Home*.

Imagine if in Margaret Atwood’s *The Handmaid’s Tale* the Commander’s wife Serena Joy secretly wrote a book about their dystopia. Imagine if her words were intermingled with the words of others openly resisting the hegemony of that time. I am writing about politics without really ever mentioning them, but the air of this new collection is redolent with them.

*Louisiana Libraries*: Your academic background is as Medievalist. Are you able to include many texts in your freshman composition classes?

Anne Babson: No. In poetry, however, the arc of my work, which is increasingly post-modern, is influenced these days by 12th-century Anglo-Norman writers and 14th-century English and French women mystics.

*Louisiana Libraries*: Which poets living or dead have made the biggest influence on your craft?

Anne Babson: I will start with the dead ones: My rogues’ gallery includes Shakespeare, who was a political writer as well as a lyrical one. I admire Charles Baudelaire, who dared to say exquisitely the things that nobody else dared say, and who was so taken by the Southern writer Edgar Allan Poe that he translated him into French for the first time. Poe contributes to my love of good prosody. Tennyson is out of fashion, but he is a master of linguistic control. No poet from Brooklyn ought to ignore Walt Whitman or Allan Ginsberg, both of whom wrote passionate work about a place I understand. Anyone who reads my collection *The White Trash Pantheon* will surely understand I owe a debt to Edgar Lee Masters. The recently departed poets who influence me include Agha Shahid Ali and Leopold Sedar Senghor. Very recently departed would be Tom Lux and Jane Cooper, both of whom taught me. Most importantly of all, surely, was “Anonymous the Poet,” who was almost always, I assume, a woman.

Among the living poets, I am most indebted to Marilyn Hacker, my mentor. Also important to my work are Jimmy Santiago Baca, Sharon Olds, and Cornelius Eady.

*Louisiana Libraries*: Are you working on any poetry projects now?

Anne Babson: I co-wrote a blues lyric with Cornelius Eady which will appear on the next album of The Cornelius Eady Trio in March 2018. I wrote the lyrics for a patriotic song that will be performed by the Middlebury College choir in Vermont in June of 2018. I have a chapbook of poems about women in film, *Dolly Shot*, coming out from Dancing Girl Press in August of 2018. And I just signed a contract with a fantastic house, Unsolicited Press, entitled *Polite Occasions*, which I imagine will come out in 2019.

I am also working on the embryo of a new collection. I am writing a memoir told through my intellectual escapes. Like all other poets ever, my childhood was dysfunctional, and rather than write a book of poems boohooing over bad parenting—nothing original—I am writing about my escapes into books and a vivid imaginary life that sustained me. In it, for instance, I have a poem entitled “My Afternoon with Laura Ingalls Wilder.” It imagines a day when my mother was in a fury, and I encounter “Half Pint” in my backyard. We decide to build a raft like Huckleberry Finn, only to discover that because we are little girls, not a boy like Tom or Huck, we can’t float the raft in the driveway of the house and escape to an island on the Mississippi. My mother, shouting inside the house, is trapped, too. So clearly it will be a feel-good book, appropriate for mothers’ day gifts. I am calling this collection *The Bunker Book*.
Reviews

Sheryl Moore Curry, Column Editor


Carnival in Louisiana: Celebrating Mardi Gras from the French Quarter to the Red River presents a comprehensive overview of Carnival and Mardi Gras in Louisiana. Divided into four sections, the author chronicles the history of Mardi Gras in New Orleans, Acadiana, Southeast Louisiana and Central and North Louisiana. Each region’s unique culture and history is reflected in the festivities held.

New Orleans has a long history of Mardi Gras celebrations. By 1743, krewes held formal balls, and the first organized parades date back to the 1830s. The author discusses the history and traditions of the city’s oldest and most popular krewes and other elements that make New Orleans parades unique. A Greater New Orleans parade calendar and a list of discontinued parading krewes with the dates of their first and last appearances are included.

In Acadiana, celebrations range from formal events to rural gatherings. In Lafayette and Houma, black tie balls are held to honor krewes royalty. Smaller towns and communities throughout the Acadiana area, organize a Courir de Mardi Gras (Running Mardi Gras). Introduced by their Cajun ancestors, courir features revelers in homemade costumes traveling from house to house begging for contributions for the communal gumbo. The day concludes with a live chicken chase.

New Roads and Baton Rouge are the center of Mardi Gras in Southeast Louisiana. These are community affairs as local organizations, churches and businesses build parade floats. The New Roads celebration ranks among the largest in the state in parade attendance after New Orleans. Baton Rouge’s parading tradition began late, with the first parade rolling in the city in 1949. The Spanish Town Parade, the most prominent procession, features suggestive themes and throws and a plastic pink flamingo mascot.

Lastly, the author discusses the areas of Central and North Louisiana. Many cities and towns in the region have a newer Mardi Gras tradition compared to other areas of Louisiana, as most did not have organized parades until the 1990s. Despite the late start, Mardi Gras is extremely popular in the region, and will continue to grow for years to come.

A lifelong resident of Louisiana, Brian Costello has written numerous books about Louisiana history. In Carnival in Louisiana, he takes the reader on a fascinating tour celebrating the history and traditions of Mardi Gras in Louisiana. This book will be suitable for both public and academic libraries.

Heather Plaisance, Dupre Library, UL Lafayette


Billowing rainclouds, chirping crickets and croaking frogs, an idling Egret in marshy water. These were things I took for granted before reading Louisiana Wild: The Protected and Restored Lands of the Nature Conservancy. This book is a beautiful call to action and reflection on the complex Louisiana ecosystems, both past, and present.

Louisiana Wild begins with a forward written by Keith Ouchley, State Director of the Nature Conservancy of Louisiana, where he explains the historically diverse ecosystems across the state and how his organization has worked to preserve these natural oases throughout Louisiana. Without judgment or condemnation, Director Ouchley acknowledges that as societies grow, new stressors are placed on the existing ecosystems to support the burgeoning populations and industries. He argues that societal growth and ecological preservation should not be competing ideals, but work hand in hand to ensure that neither vanish. He uses the statistic of one football field of coastal lands being lost a year as a rallying call. His forward encourages good environmental stewardship of all of the habitat types throughout the state.

Louisiana Wild is organized in such a way not only to stimulate the reader’s interest in the beauty and bounty of the natural ecosystems of Louisiana, but also to ensure their opportunity to focus on the regions and sites that interest them the most. Ouchley’s passionate introduction, combined with C.C. Lockwood’s beautiful photography and his personal experiences with nature, create a fascinating picture of existing Louisiana ecosystems. In addition to the eloquent language throughout the book, editors and authors sectioned the content by specific locations which are mapped out on the page before the
introduction. This map also includes cooperative projects the Nature Conservancy is working on throughout the state, and the efforts of these projects are discussed in the appendix. The back of the book contains an index and notes.

*Louisiana Wild: The Protected and Restored Lands of Nature Conservancy* is a beautiful table book and serves as a reminder of all that Louisiana has to offer, and lose.

Cheylon Woods, Ernest J. Gaines Center, Edith Garland Dupre’ Library, University of Louisiana at Lafayette


*My Sunshine Away* is written by a Baton Rouge native who is currently the Director of the Creative Writing Workshop at UNO. His stories and essays have been published in the New York Times and American Short Fiction. The author is very familiar with Baton Rouge, whose natives will recognize his references to many local landmarks. He is honest about the negative and positive aspects of Louisiana and his home town, but his sensitivity, love and passion for the state are clearly evident.

The novel is told by the now adult narrator who is describing his teenage years. The story begins brutally with the rape of fifteen year old Lindy Simpson. The rest of the book details the romantic infatuation of the narrator for the victim and his obsession with solving the brutal crime that she experienced. A cast of unsavory characters is introduced as possible suspects, and the reader is even in doubt as to whether the narrator himself could be the rapist. The narrator experiences other tragedies such as the death of his older sister and the abandonment by his father, all of which make him a stronger, insightful adult. As mentioned, the center of the story besides the mystery is the narrator’s love and romantic obsession with Lindy. Lindy is his entire world, but his fantasy of her is completely different from the real Lindy Simpson, her true feelings and personality.

The author creates vivid depictions of Louisiana life and explorations of his characters. He describes football and nutria. He depicts Louisiana citizens taking refuge from the stifling heat by eating great food, “When everything is burning, sweating, beaten down by a torturous sun, only your tongue can be fooled.” The narrator’s catching of a fish is richly expressed: “As long as that fish wanted to get away, and as long as I was unwilling to let it, we would have each other.” He vividly portrays the differences between Baton Rouge and New Orleans residents, and the forced time in which they had to live together during the Katrina evacuations, and how Baton Rouge changed because of it.

The author does a great job of creating an involving mystery and inspirational coming of age story with cast of complicated, believable characters. Mr. Walsh’s deep love for his home state with all of its problems, possibilities, and character is clearly evident. This book will be suitable for public and academic libraries.

Van Viator, Lafourche Parish Public Library

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**Make your mark on Louisiana Libraries!**

We are looking for articles on new technologies, library history, and community outreach.

Email your drafts to celise@beau.org.
The second Regular Meeting of the 2017-2018 Executive Board of the Louisiana Library Association, a nonprofit corporation under the laws of the State of Louisiana, was held at the P&N Office at 8550 Unit-ed Plaza in Baton Rouge, Louisiana on November 10, 2017.

The following Executive Board members were present:
- Patricia Brown, President
- Sonnet Ireland, 2nd Vice-President
- Erin Chesnutt, Secretary
- Bland O’Connor, Executive Director
- Ellen Jenkins, Academic Chair
- Abigail DeSoto, GODORT Chair
- Julie Champagne, Public Chair
- Donald Westmoreland, Trustee Co-Chair
- Al Barron, Trustee Co-Chair
- Celise Reech-Harper, Louisiana Libraries Editor
- William Olmstadt, Subject Specialist Chair
- Sarah Simms, SELA Representative
- Hayley Johnson, SELA Representative

Also in attendance were Brenna Crockett and Melanie Talley, Association Coordinators, and Laura-Ellen Ayres, Conference Committee Chair

Absent were:
- Mary Cosper-LeBoeuf, Immediate Past President
- Charlene Picheloup, Parliamentarian
- Catherine Smith, 1st Vice-President
- Susan Gauthier, LASL Chair
- Sarah Creekmore, LaSSAL Chair
- Vivian McCain, ALA Councilor

President Patricia Brown called the meeting of the 2017-2018 LLA Executive Board to order at 11:07.

Minutes
Chesnutt moved to approve the minutes of the board’s meeting and orientation which took place on July 28, 2017. Jenkins seconded and the motion passed with no opposition.

President’s Comments
President Brown expressed her thanks to the Conference Committee for all their hard work and made the following announcements regarding committees:
- Most committee slots have been filled but there is still a need for members on the Anthony Benoit Award, Intellectual Freedom Award, Scholarship, and Legislation committees.
- Stephanie Orr from Remington College is the new chair of the membership committee; Celise Reech-Harper is also joining that committee.

Brown reported that lobbyist Scott Kirkpatrick asked for more specific details on what projects or objectives the additional funding LLA requests from the legislature will be used for. The ad hoc committee for providing direction for LLA lobbying activities plans to meet to discuss this in December.

Olmstadt pointed out that entities such as LOUIS have excellent documentation on how the funds are being spent. Brown agreed, saying that the talking points don’t need to be new they just need to be reiterated. Westmoreland added that it is often helpful for library leaders to get out of their offices and look around to get a fresh perspective on what programs or projects would benefit from additional funding. Barron proposed looking towards our peers, such as Mississippi which has state level funding, to set benchmarks for ourselves. Ireland proposed educating people that just because some article, ebook, or other piece of information is found online does not mean it is free.

Executive Director’s Report
O’Connor provided a written report and an update that the membership directory will soon be going to print. O’Connor then provided an overview of the relationship between Postlethwaite & Netterville (P&N) and LLA with visual support from a PowerPoint presentation.
- There are 2 agreements of note: the P&N Association Management Agreement and the Compilation Engagements for accounting functions.
- The Management Agreement has not been updated since 2008. Since that time, P&N has overseen the association’s conversion from a 501(c)6 to 501(c)3 status, conversion to a more robust membership database, a new website design with logo, collateral updates, integrated membership database and event registration into the association’s new website, electronic record storage, and increased network security.
- Future considerations for the Executive Board:
• Update the management agreement
• Review costs and consider cost control strategies
• Give feedback to P&N on improvements to optimize service levels
• When asked if fixed fees relating to P&N’s management are reviewed by the board each year, it was explained that the Finance Committee reviews a more detailed account each year before putting the annual budget before the Executive Board for approval.

President Brown announced that Past President Cosper-LeBoeuf has taken on the task of getting the Association’s budgeting and financial management back on track with a task force. She would welcome comments.

Budget & Financial Discussion
O’Connor highlighted the following for the year ending June 30, 2017:
• We budgeted for $187,000 in revenues but only received $178,490. The deficit seems to have come not from membership dues but from exhibitor fees and sponsorships which were budgeted fairly aggressively in the first place.
• The Association ended the year $2,200 in the red. O’Connor then touched on the current year up to September 30, 2017:
  • The Association is currently running a profit but is expecting a probable deficit again this year.

Past President’s Comments
Absent; see written report.
Cosper-LeBoeuf provided a written report announcing an Operations & Transition Committee which will, as stated earlier, work towards straightening out budgeting and management concerns. Members and the Board have expressed concerns about rising costs and decreasing membership. Related concerns and topics discussed included:
• Finding ways to improve value of membership and participation for academic librarians. President Brown noted that this sounds like a good past-president’s project for her to pursue next year. Jenkins and Ireland expressed an interest in joining her on an Academic Outreach Committee.
• Asking what members and potential members want / would value most from their membership and finding ways to match our offerings to the responses. Methods of contacting non-members for said query include listservs, LOUIS, dioceses and school boards.
• Can LLA purchase ALA (or other) webinars to stream to our members? Jenkins will look into the possibility of Academic section sponsoring some webinars to encourage membership.
• With ALA’s conference being held in-state in 2018, we will explore ways to use the opportunity to communicate with non-LLA member Louisiana librarians / library staff and encourage membership.
• Explore student membership for SLIS students -- not just from LSU -- and recruiting more SLIS faculty.
• Ireland suggested an adopt-a-legislator style project. Melanie Sims is currently working with the Legislation Committee to meet the legislators in their districts and not just in Baton Rouge.

Editor’s Comments
In addition to her written report, Reech-Harper reported receiving positive feedback from the last journal issue. Relating to the membership invitation letter project which began at our last meeting, she asked board members to send out invitations to non-members within the next few weeks. LLA office offered to provide envelopes and postage for the project for those who wished to take them home from today’s meeting.

ALA Councilor’s Report
Absent; see written report.

Academic Section Report
Jenkins reported:
• Notes & Tracings newsletter is now available online
• ACRL-Louisiana is hosting a free webinar on fake news on November 30. It can be viewed at either LSU or ULM
• Academic Section plans to join with Subject Specialists and ACRL-LA to host an academic luncheon at this year’s LLA conference.
• Academic Section is co-sponsoring a Grants & Proposal Writing preconference.

GODORT Section Report
DeSoto reported:
• Section is pursuing several leads to engage a speaker for their breakfast program.

LASL Section Report
Absent; see written report.

LaSSAL Section Report
Absent; see written report.
The group noted that the LaSSAL conference in Bossier City was very successful. There were some problems with the online registration and fee
payment system, but P&N has already rectified the issue.

**Public Section Report**
Champagne reported:
• the Section has plans to shake up the usual dine-around event with integrated book talks
• the Section is considering focusing on regional workshops throughout the year rather than preconferences. Topics of interest for workshops in general include looking towards the future and succession planning for after retirement. This year’s conference will include at least one extended session for a sort of orientation for new library directors.
• Champagne moved to approve a preconference of a Historic Downtown Alexandria Tour of the Bentley Hotel, Rapides Main Library, Genealogy Library, and tea at the Huie Dellmon House. The cost would be $23 per person ($15.50 for members) and co-sponsorship is from the Public and Subject Specialist sections. Ireland seconded the motion and it carried unanimously.

**Subject Specialists Section Report**
In addition to his written report, Olmstadt announced:
• In response to the feedback received last year, Subject Specialists Section wishes to host a practical, hands-on preconference on digitizing materials. The training would cost $30 per member ($45 / non-member; $15 / student). Olmstadt moved to approve this preconference; Westmoreland seconded and the motion carried unanimously.
• Olmstadt moved that an NNLM-SCR preconference on grant writing be approved. The preconference will run between 1 – 5 pm at a cost of $22.50 per person ($15 for members) with refreshments provided. Westmoreland seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

**Trustees Section Report**
The Trustees Section reported that nearly 50 people attended workshops for trustees held around the state earlier in the year. They proposed a speaker for the Public / Trustee Luncheon and further discussion was tabled to be further discussed at the conference committee meeting.

**1st Vice President’s Report**
Absent; see written report.

**2nd Vice President’s Report**
Ireland reported that activity is increasing in Interest Groups.
• She has created a Slack site to facilitate communication among Group coordinators.
• New coordinators included Celise Reece-Harper for Storytelling and Jennifer Creavy for Social Media.
• The purpose and descriptions of Interest Groups should be included in the LLA manual at the time of the group’s creation. Ireland will try to get the Group members involved in a discussion via listserv to reach consensus on how the various Groups’ descriptions should read.

**Conference Committee Report**
In addition to the written report, Ayers reported:
• The conference committee is scheduled to meet again next Tuesday.
• The new program proposal form is now in use. The committee anticipates approximately 50 programs.
• The deadline for the poster session proposals was extended to February 1, and a poster prize of $50 has been allocated.
• The Riverfront Center can segment WiFi access between attendees and vendors for $290.
• Southern Creations catering will send costs in the next week or so.
• Westmoreland moved to approve offering 65 8-foot by 8-foot vendor booths at a cost of $500 each; 5 booths to non-profits at a cost of $200 each; and a discount of $50 to new vendors where new vendors are defined as those who have not exhibited at an LLA Conference since 2008. Ireland seconded and the motion carried unanimously.

**SELA**
The Board confirmed that the appointment of Hayley Johnson and Sarah Simms as SELA representatives will continue until 2020.

**Legislation Committee**
Absent; see written report.
Brown noted that discussions are continuing regarding a statewide virtual library.

**Adjourn**
Brown announced that the Board will next meet at 10:00 AM on March 7, 2018 at the Westside Regional Library in Alexandria.

At approximately 2:25, the meeting adjourned without an official call. Brown noted that she would convene the sub-committee for Conference Programming after a two minute break.
Information literacy is an important issue in libraries. Now that we’ve stated the obvious, let’s think about what that means. Libraries offer key services that help users interpret and understand the world around them. Information literacy skills help them differentiate between facts and opinions, truths and claims, legitimate sources and Russians. That last part is a little tongue-in-cheek, but it is also a good point. As a society, we’ve become overwhelmed by the sheer amount of information bombarding us every minute of the day. Library users do not have time to stop, think, and consider how to apply these skills unless those skills have already become second-nature to them. That is where we come in.

Librarians at all levels need to come together and discuss information literacy. We can discuss tactics and learning tools. We can brainstorm ideas for teaching these skills to users at all ages. We can share goals, triumphs, and frustrations with each other. More importantly, we can work together to find solutions that we would not find alone. That is the goal of the NOLA Information Literacy Forum, hosted annually by the NOLA Information Literacy Collective (nolaILC). The Forum is a free conference held in the summer where librarians can learn more about teaching information literacy to their users.

The roots of nolaILC go back to 2012 and Loyola University New Orleans. A group of Loyola reference librarians organized a free forum on information literacy called the NOLA Information Literacy Forum. This day-long forum included various presentations, as well as lightning rounds, that participants could attend. It was followed with a small social hour where everyone would network and discuss what they learned. From this event, the NOLA Information Literacy Collective was born.

In 2013, several librarians were invited to join the inaugural Executive Board of a new organization that would be dedicated to maintaining this free annual forum. This was the beginning of the nolaILC. The Executive Board would plan and organize the forum each year. This included determining the location, date, and format. It also included organizing a call for proposals, evaluating said proposals, and creating the schedule for the forum.

Focused primarily on academic librarians, the Executive Board made an exception when I transitioned from an academic librarian to a public librarian in 2016. Unfortunately, after the Forum in 2016, many of the original members left the area for other positions. This left the Board with a total of four members, three of whom were still new. For the 2017 Forum, I, as the last original member, took over as Chair. The idea of expanding the Forum to all types of librarians (and even educators) was embraced, and the organization has begun efforts to redefine its audience and its purpose.

One of the results was the branding of the 2017 NOLA Information Literacy Forum as a Faux Conference, emphasising its focus on fake news and various types of information literacy. We chose a town hall format with panels on news literacy, data/visual literacy, financial literacy, and metaliteracy. We had several non-librarian guest speakers, including Mark Lorando, editor of The Times-Picayune. We also had the people who literally wrote the book on metaliteracy as our virtual guest speakers for the metaliteracy panel, Trudi Jacobson and Tom Mackey. The inclusion of non-library panelists allowed us to have conversations with multiple viewpoints. It also allowed an insider’s look into how these professions do their part to increase awareness and understanding.

This year, Sarah Simms, Chair, and I have expanded the organization to create a chapter in northern Louisiana that will be dedicated to creating a free annual forum for librarians who may not be able to travel to the original Forum. We also welcomed several new Board members in order to keep the organization going for years to come. Who knows what other surprises the nolaILC has in store? All we know is that our goal is to expand our group to librarians from all fields because we work better when we work together.

So what does all of this have to do with a column? Well, one of our efforts in the information literacy discussion is to spread awareness. What better way to do that than through Louisiana Libraries? This new column will explore information literacy through different angles and topics. Our goal is to get a real discussion started about information literacy, and we would love for you to be part of that conversation.
Conference Awards

Pamela D. Arceneaux (left) was recognized for her 2018 Literary Award Honor Book, *Guidebooks to Sin: The Blue Books of Storyville, New Orleans*

Donald Davis (left), Director of LA Sea Grant at LSU and Carl Brasseaux (right), winners of the 2018 Louisiana Literary Award for *Ain’t There No More: Louisiana’s Disappearing Coastal Plain*

James O. Modissette Award for Public Library Trustees presented to Renard Chatman (center), Concordia Parish Library Board Member, by Committee Chair Giovanni Tairov (right) along with Dorothy White, Concordia Parish Library Director (left).

James O. Modissette Award for School Libraries, Middle School and Jr./Sr. High School: Elizabeth Kahn (right), Patrick F. Taylor Science and Technology Academy, by Committee Chair Stephanie Wilkes (left).

James O. Modissette Award for School Libraries, Elementary School awarded to Paula Clemmons (right), Bishop Noland Episcopal Day School by Kim “Lovie” Howell, LASL Chair.

Outstanding Support Staff Professional Award was presented to Kari Johnson, Library Clerical (Center), Book Fair Chairperson, Stockwell Place Elementary School Library by Kim “Lovie” Howell, LASL Chair (left) and Elissa Plank (right).

Paul Ardoin (left), Technology Coordinator for the St. Martin Parish Library, was awarded the Public Librarian of the Year Award by Mary Cosper-LeBoeuf (right), LLA Past President.

Marty Miller, Art and Design Librarian at LSU (left), and Andrea Hebert (right), Human Sciences, Education, and Distance Learning Librarian at LSU were presented the Article of the Year Award by *Louisiana Libraries* Editor Celise Reech-Harper.

All photographs are compliments of Joey Bailey of JB Studios and Louisiana Library Association conference attendees.
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The Louisiana Literary Award Committee consists of members appointed by the LLA President and approved by the Executive Board. The membership represents both the different types of libraries (academic, public, etc.) and the different geographic areas of the state. Members of this year’s committee are Elissa Plank (Chair), Charlene Picheloup, Sonnet Ireland, Kimberly Adkins, Keisa Arceneaux, Lauren McdAdams, Pamela Edwards, Debbie Huntingdon, and Susan Gardebled. The purpose of the Louisiana Literary Award Committee is to promote interest in books related to Louisiana, to encourage their publication, and to keep the library community informed on the release of such books. This year’s winner is Ain’t There No More: Louisiana’s Disappearing Coastal Plain by Carl A. Brasseaux and Donald W. Davis. In an effort to put a human face on an ecological disaster, the book chronicles the economic history of coastal Louisiana and its people. As such, the people living in the region deserve to have a voice when deciding how to fix the problems caused by coastal erosion. The Committee also recognized two other books as being worthy of special mention. Guidebooks to Sin: The Blue Books of Storyville, New Orleans by Pamela Arceneaux is the first contemporary study of the directories of New Orleans prostitutes produced between 1897 and 1917. This illustrated bibliography catalogues the copies now owned by the Historic New Orleans Collection and focuses on the cultural significance of the advertisements contained therein. The book is published by the Historic New Orleans Collection. The Cemeteries of New Orleans: A Cultural History by Peter B. Dedek traces the history of the cemeteries of New Orleans and catalogues their architectural styles, pointing out their cultural influences and the historical precedents by means of detailed photographs.

In addition, therefore, to choosing the best book about Louisiana published each year, the Committee also compiles a bibliography. This list contains not only the candidates for the award by virtue of their subject but also books on any subject written by a Louisiana author. This bibliography can be used by librarians in the state for the purpose of collection development.

Adult Fiction and Non-Fiction:


Calamia, Ron, and Angela Cave. 2017. *Fantastic Saints*. Harahan, LA: Fantastic Saints, LLC.


-----, 2017. *When Lulu was Hot*. Self-published.


Juvenile Fiction and Non-Fiction:
2018

North American Serials Interest Group (NASIG) Annual Conference
Atlanta, Georgia
June 8-1, 2018

Special Library Association Annual Conference
Baltimore, Maryland
June 11-13, 2018

American Association of Law Libraries Annual Meeting
Baltimore, MD
July 4-17, 2018

American Library Association Annual Conference
New Orleans, Louisiana
June 21-26, 2018

Black Caucus of the ALA
Atlanta, Georgia
August 9-13, 2018

LOUIS Users Conference (LUC)
Baton Rouge, LA
September 12-14, 2018

Arkansas Library Association Conference
Rogers, AR
September 23-25, 2018

Banned Books Week
September 23-29, 2018

Teen Read Week
October 7-13, 2018

Mississippi Library Association Conference
Meridian, MS
October 16-19, 2018

Louisiana Archives & Manuscripts Association
Ruston, LA
October 26, 2018

South Carolina Library Association/SELA Joint Conference
Greenville, SC
October 31- November 2, 2018

2019

American Library Association (Midwinter)
Seattle, Washington
January 25-29, 2019

Music Library Association Annual Meeting
St. Louis, Missouri
February 20-24, 2019

Teen Tech Week
March 3-9, 2019

ACRL Annual National Conference
Cleveland, Ohio
April 10-13, 2019

Texas Library Association Conference
Austin, Texas
April 15-18, 2019

Medical Library Association Annual Meeting
Chicago, Illinois
May 3-8, 2019

American Library Association Annual Conference
Washington, D.C.
June 20-25, 2019

Teen Read Week
October 13-19, 2019

American Association of School Librarians Conference
Louisville, Kentucky
November 14-16, 2019

Charleston Conference
November 4-9, 2019

Young Adult Services Symposium (YALSA)
Salt Lake City, UT
November 2-4, 2018

Charleston Conference
November 5-10, 2018

Louisiana Book Festival
Baton Rouge, LA
November 10, 2018

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