

TAL Tales

The Alberta Library Newsletter

Celebrate Libraries! “Libraries: The World at Your Fingertips”

In 2005, libraries from across the country came together to celebrate Canadian Library Week. That success, coupled with the number of activities taking place, led to the entire month of October being designated to celebrate and recognize the achievements, valuable programs, and services that all types of libraries provide to Canadians.

The theme of Library Month 2006 is “Libraries: The World at Your Fingertips” and celebrates how libraries serve the community, including the educational and business sectors, by providing access to information, and the ability to access the world through the interconnectivity of libraries.

Individuals in public libraries responsible for communications have been forwarded the media kit that was created by a team from across the country. They should have also received the special poster that was created for the month.

In addition to the many activities planned at the local level, TAL has spearheaded a special newspaper insert. On October 1, a total of 360,000 copies will be distributed through daily newspapers in Edmonton, Calgary, Red Deer, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Cold Lake, Athabasca, Fort McMurray, Grande Prairie, Sherwood Park, and St. Albert. The special insert highlights a number of the province-wide services available to Albertans as well as some of the many types of programs offered by libraries. In addition to the copies inserted in newspapers throughout the province, approximately 20,000 copies will be shipped to the various regional libraries in order that they can be distributed to locations not included in the newspaper coverage.

The insert will be available online through the Edmonton Journal. TAL will have a link to the location on the front page of the website as soon as CanWest has posted it.

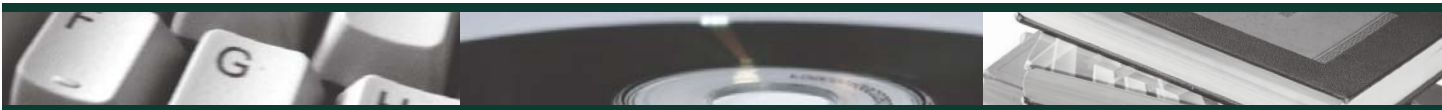
Thank you for your support of Canadian Library Month.

September 2006

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Focus on Libraries Day

The TAL Advocacy Committee has declared October 25, 2006 to be “Focus on Libraries Day.” This day was chosen to be toward the end of Canadian Library Month in October and geared to be a day of political action. On that day, the Advocacy Committee encourages all library members to contact an elected official and/or funder to discuss the benefits of libraries to Albertans.

The objective for the day is to make a combined effort to discuss with funders at various government levels, the impact libraries make towards the quality of life in Alberta.

Some suggested topics to discuss:

- copyright legislation
- literacy
- overall benefits to the community

Suggested type of meetings:

- lunch
- office meeting
- library tour

Other alternative suggestions:

- phone call
- taxed letter
- e-mail message

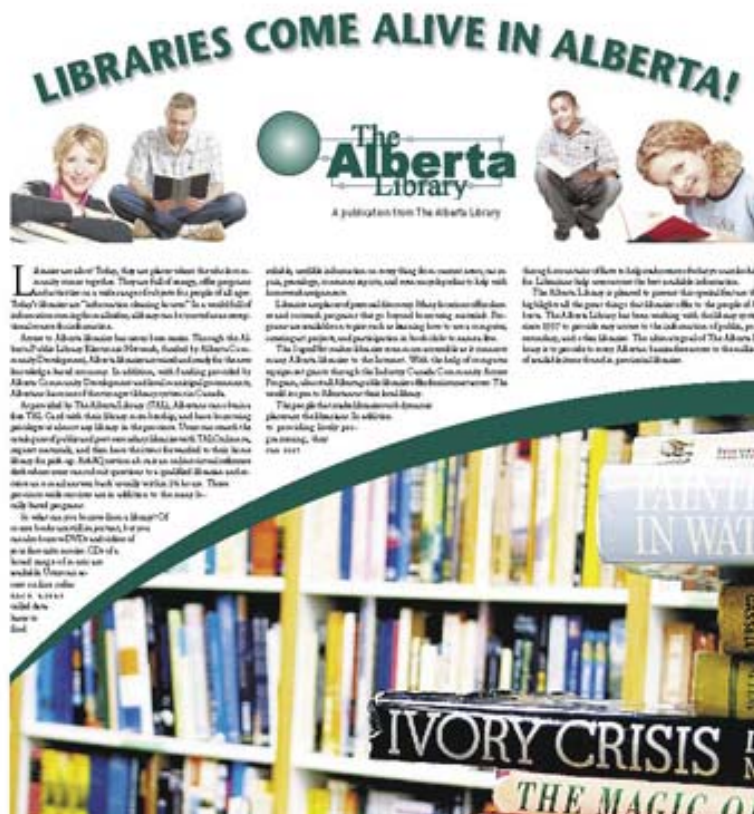
TAL encourages libraries to make arrangement or appointments with your targeted official as soon as possible.

Thank you for your support for “Focus on Libraries Day.”

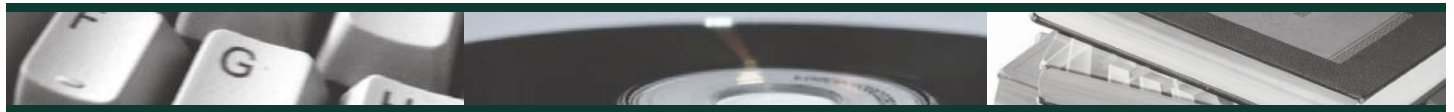
Promote Your Library During Canadian Library Month

Help raise awareness of the vital role libraries play in the lives of Albertans. Here are suggestions for activities during library month:

- Have staff available to the public for questions and information; this will permit the public to get to know you and what you do better.
- Create a writing contest on the topic such as “Why I love my library”.
- Invite a local author to attend a book launch or promote a book.
- Participate in Focus on Libraries Day.
- Host an “open mic” for the public to read original writing.
- Host a live acoustic music performance in the Audio/Visual section of the library instead of playing a music CD.
- Host a drop-in story time.
- Create a “read off your fine” program.
- Find local businesses to sponsor items for draws related to libraries.
- Tell the history of the library in a newsletter published specially for Canadian Library Month.
- Create a free family membership contest where one family membership is awarded in a draw during Library Month (Thorhild Public Library).
- Host a drop-in storytime for 3 – 6 year olds and their parents (Medicine Hat Public Library).



The Library Month insert will be published on October 1 in daily newspapers across Alberta.



Lois Hole Campus Alberta Digital Library Update



With the receipt of first year funding for the Lois Hole Campus Alberta Digital Library (LHCADL) from Alberta Advanced Education, LHCADL Manager, Kit Wilson, her colleagues and the LHCADL Resource Selection Committee and Information Literacy and Awareness Committee have been working hard to create the resources and services that will be the foundation for the LHCADL. The Resource Selection Committee, chaired by Helen Clarke from the University of Calgary Library, and the Information Literacy and Awareness Committee, co-chaired by Shauna Rutherford, University of Calgary and Meagan Weber, Mount Royal College met a number of times over the summer months. A complete committee membership can be viewed on the TAL website, under the LHCADL tab.

Committee Updates

Resource Selection

The LHCADL Resource Selection Committee is represented by all sectors of the post-secondary institutions served by the LHCADL. The committee's mandate was to recommend and prioritize the licensed digital resources that would be offered in the first and subsequent years. This was a daunting task as participating institutions have students from a broad range of disciplines taking everything from adult upgrading and industry apprenticeships to divinity degrees and MBAs. The results from two surveys sent out over the past months indicated that the products subscribed to in the TAL Universal Core are the most logical starting point. While many LHCADL participants already subscribe to the TAL Universal Core, their budgets will benefit by liberating funds for other, more institutionally specific electronic resources. Those institutions who have up until now offered few or no electronic resources to their students, will find a treasure trove of material at their disposal. The survey results were also used to develop various tools to aid in future LHCADL selection decisions.

The complicated process of soliciting proposals from various vendors has now begun. The overriding challenge is to maximize the value of provincial post-secondary funding. Vendors are being challenged to be a "value-added" supplier and asked to maximize the quantity of product at the best possible price. Ultimately, the goal is to maximize the benefit the LHCADL can offer Alberta learners.

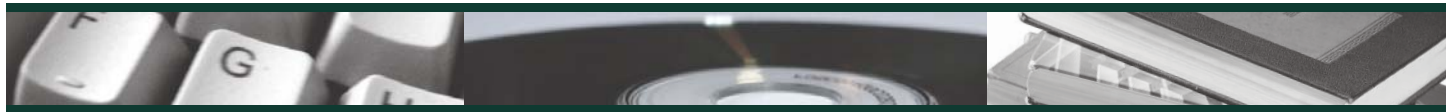
Information Literacy and Awareness

The committees charged with developing the LHCADL Business and Implementation Plan recognized that the success of this initiative depended largely on institutions being able to easily access and integrate resources into their local learning opportunities. If library staff at participating institutions could not confidently communicate the depth and breadth of the new resources and how best to make use of them to learners, faculty and researchers, the LHCADL would never fulfill its potential. To this end, the LHCADL Information Literacy and Awareness Committee (LILAC) has been working on an Information Literacy Audit survey that will be used to assess the current state of information literacy (IL) at member institutions and to solicit their wants and needs. The committee hopes to establish a collegial network to facilitate the sharing of IL resources and expertise and to coordinate training opportunities. LILAC is also working to create a toolkit; a collection of resources that will be available to library staff to facilitate the use of LHCADL materials. In late August, the committee organized two training workshops in Calgary and Edmonton for staff from member libraries who had not previously had access to the TAL Universal Core databases. As a sign of the excitement and commitment felt by member libraries, it was very gratifying that each library managed to send at least one staff person to one of the workshops, even during the start-up of a new academic year.

continued on page 4...



Kit Wilson demonstrates the functionality of the Lois Hole Campus Alberta Digital Library databases.



Lois Hole Campus Alberta Digital Library Update - continued

...continued from page 3.

Other Updates

Electronic Resource Management System (ERMS)

A key element that was identified early on as a contributor to the success of the LHCADL was the licensing of an ERMS. The licensing of digital resources is a complicated process involving numerous vendors, various terms of agreement, differing licensing periods and substantial costs. While ERMS applications are still in their developmental stages, they will save staff time and create efficiencies for both TAL and its members. Kit Wilson assembled a team of individuals accustomed to working with this type of software and issued a Request for Information (RFI) to the industry. The task is to find a vendor that will offer the most complete solution to the challenges presented by licensing resources in a consortia environment.

Information Technology Services

Behind the scenes at TAL and the LHCADL is a sophisticated technical infrastructure that provides onsite or authenticated remote access to the licensed resources. Following a national hiring competition, Stephen Thornton was hired to lead the team that provides this crucial service to the library community. As the new Director, Information Technology Services, Steve's services will be a shared resource for TAL and the LHCADL. One of his first tasks has been a review of all IT related tasks currently supported by TAL. Position descriptions and hiring plans are being prepared for all technical staff required for upcoming projects. Renovations have recently been completed to provide space for up to ten staff in the TAL IT Unit in Cameron Library at the University of Alberta.

Participation Agreement

In return for its significant investment in the LHCADL, the expectation of the provincial government is that member institutions sign a participation agreement committing them to building on the spirit of the initiative. The one-page agreement addresses four elements of this vision: expansion of electronic resources, inclusivity/lifelong learning, accountability and recognition. Kit Wilson and the LHCADL committee worked to develop an agreement which would be clear and acceptable for the institutions while ensuring that the goals of Alberta Advanced Education were met. The agreement was approved at the August 31 meeting of the LHCADL committee. It will be distributed to member institutions in early fall.

Digitization Initiatives

Alberta's four universities were identified as the lead institutions to develop a series of locally digitized resources of specific interest to Albertans. In the first year of the LHCADL, the institutions have identified a number of exciting projects ranging from capturing complete runs of regional newspapers to important First Nation collections, and expanding online access to Western Canadiana. A technical subcommittee of the Digitization Committee has been struck, whose mandate is to research national and international digitization standards and make recommendations that will ensure LHCADL compliance.

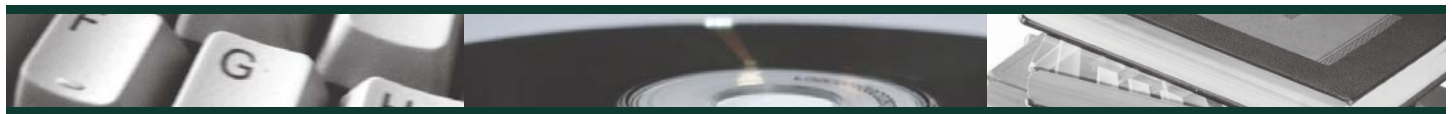
Upcoming LHCADL Events

Kit Wilson and Ernie Ingles, Chair of the LHCADL committee, will present an update on LHCADL at the upcoming Netspeed Conference in Edmonton (October 18 – 20). Their session is scheduled for Friday morning.

The 2006/07 Academic Year is upon us. Returning students, particularly at smaller institutions, will see a substantial improvement in the online resources that will assist them to meet their academic goals. This is an exciting time in the overall development of the Lois Hole Campus Alberta Digital Library.



Anne Carr-Wiggin, Sandra Shores, Steve Thornton, Linacre Griffiths and Kit Wilson at the Maskwachees Cultural College.



Promoting the ORC for the 2006/2007 School Year



The 2006/2007 promotion of the Online Reference Centre (ORC) is set to launch for the upcoming school year in Alberta.

This fall, a series of five posters will be distributed throughout Alberta to secondary school boards that will have the district specific user names and passwords. These in-school posters will promote the benefits of ORC to students and teachers as a reliable, relevant homework resource.

The ORC brochure promoting the benefits of the ORC and outlining the various databases has been redesigned and will be part of the package sent to secondary schools in Alberta. With the new brochure, the ORC logo has also been updated.

The ORC was established in June 2001 as a shared project between Alberta Learning and The Alberta Library (TAL). The result of this collaboration was to continue

to advance TAL's vision of barrier-free access to information for all Albertans.

The electronic resources available through the ORC support students, teachers and parents in K-12 programs across the province. ORC provides a protected, on-line environment where educators and parents can be confident that students can access reliable, relevant information aligned to the Alberta Learning curriculum, and as such, continues to demonstrate its value to communities.

Since 2001, the ORC has grown from four licensed resources to eight, including French as well as English resources. Promotion of ORC resources includes presentations to teaching professionals at conferences, conventions and Alberta Teaching Association specialist councils.

As of August 2006, the resources licensed by TAL for the ORC are: Science Resource Center, The Canadian Encyclopedia, Early Canadiana Online, eLibrary Elementary, eLibrary Curriculum Edition, Worldbook Online, Grolier Online Kids, Grolier Online Passport, and SIRS Discoverer.

For ORC information, contact Diane GallowaySolowan,
ORC Program Coordinator
Tel: (780) 414-0805
E-mail: dgs@thealbertalibrary.ab.ca

Homework got you stressed?

Get started here.
www.LearnAlberta.ca

Math Pg. 44
Social ch. 6

Bio Quiz
Monday

Visit www.LearnAlberta.ca and select the Online Reference Centre.

District: _____
User name: _____
Password: _____

Online Reference Centre/
Centre de Référence en Ligne

Visit www.LearnAlberta.ca and select the Online Reference Centre.

Visit www.LearnAlberta.ca et cliquez sur le Centre de Référence en Ligne.

User name/Mot d'utilisateur: _____
Password/Mot de passe: _____

Alberta Learning eLibrary

Ask A Question Program Update

Originally launched in 1999 by Grant MacEwan College, NAIT, and Red Deer College, the AAQ virtual reference service now spans the province with collaborative service being provided to 9 academic libraries and all Alberta public libraries. Available online, the service accepts questions 24/7 and responses are provided, usually within 24 hours.

To make the service even more visible in branch and online, the "look" has been updated. Participating libraries will soon be receiving information on the new logo and website as well as new posters and AAQ post-it notes.

The current website has the design from its original launch. To update and make the site more user-friendly, a redesign

project for both the logo and website was initiated. The logo now incorporates the website address to assist with recall and the new site requests all the pertinent information on the front page. The new look is warm and friendly.

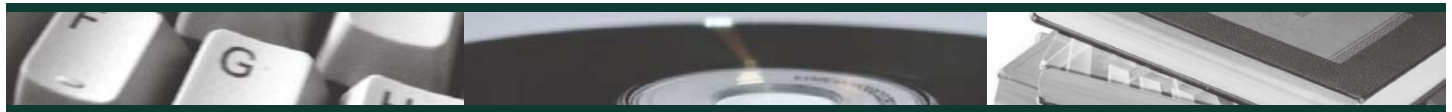
Along with the site relaunch, TAL will be forwarding posters and post-it notes to participating libraries. The poster features a series of real questions that have been submitted to AAQ. The intent is that patrons understand that they can ask literally any kind of question. The post-it notes will be sent to the reference desk for librarians distribute to patrons. The purpose of the post-it note is to reinforce the website location and that patrons can submit questions any time of the day or night.

TAL and the AAQ Service Committee look forward to the relaunch and an ever increasing number of inquiries.

For more information, contact Dyan Perley, Ask A Question Administrator, at dperley@thealbertalibrary.ab.ca or 414-0805, ext. 236.

AAQ's New Look





Who's New at TAL?

Stephen (Steve) Thornton, P.Eng. is the new Director, Information Technology Services (ITS), for the Alberta Library. Steve brings 24 years of technical and managerial experience supporting information management/information technology in research and university environments.

During his extensive career, Steve has been a key player in a number of key departments withing the University of Alberta. His portfolio included E-Learning Services (learning management systems, synchronous tools and the campus object repository), Central Support (internet applications: mail, web and central computing IDs), Central Server Support (central servers, disk and backup services), Client Services (7x24 Operations, Product Sales, Help Desk and Optical Scoring), and Instructional Technology Environments (Computer Labs and Smart Classrooms).

Steve led the development of partnerships with on-campus and industry members and established the IBM Canada's Western Canadian Competency Centre at the University of Alberta in 1994. He established the SunSITE Alberta project in 1998 that partnered the University of Alberta campus with Sun Microsystems and Oracle Canada to develop the university's first centralized object repository, and supported the creation of the Sun Microsystems' Centre of Excellence in E-Learning in 2002.

In 2005, Steve participated in developing the technology infrastructure plan for the Lois Hole Campus Alberta Digital Library.

As Director of ITS at TAL, Steve will lead the team that supports TAL Online, SFX, and EzProxy as well as preparing to support the requirements of the Lois Hole Campus Alberta Digital Library.

Steve can be contacted at sthornton@thealbertalibrary.ab.ca or 492-8322.



Stephen Thornton
Director, Information Technology Services

TAL Strategic Planning Process Update

Thank you to all participants in the focus group meetings that were held in May and June. Your input allowed us to gather information and perceptions about benefits, issues, and trends for the Planning Team to consider when drafting TAL's 2007 – 2011 strategic plan.

On August 15 and 16, the Planning Team met to review the summaries compiled from the focus group meetings by Toni Lashbrook. Toni facilitated the process of drawing out potential goals for TAL, from the comments and responses from the focus groups. When goals had been identified, the team, facilitated by Toni, proceeded to draw out strategies to meet these goals.

Several meetings will be held in September and October to review TAL's vision, mission and value statements. The team will also identify deliverables for the goals identified on August 15 and 16th.

The planning team has indicated their enthusiasm for this process and their intention to present a clear strategic plan to the Executive Committee and TAL Board this fall. Your input has been very valuable to this process and heavily relied upon by the planning team.

The members of the planning team are:
Rowena Lunn (chair) - Marigold Regional Library
Dean Frey - Red Deer Public Library
Joanne Griener - Edmonton Public Library
James Rout - Banff Centre
Ross Thrasher - Mount Royal College

If you have any comments or questions regarding the planning process, please contact Christine Bouchier at cbouchier@thealbertalibrary.ab.ca or 414-0805, ext. 225.

Notice to TAL Membership

Effective September 1, 2006, the Town of Banff is no longer a signatory to the Marigold Agreement and therefore Banff Public Library is no longer a member library of the Marigold Library System.

As a result, the Banff Public Library is no longer a member of The Regional Automation Consortium (TRAC) or The Alberta Library (TAL). Residents of the Town of Banff are not eligible for the services provided through or by TRAC or TAL, including access to the online databases and the TAL Card.

Should any library received inquiries from Banff Library patrons, please refer them to their local library board and town council.



Netspeed Almost Sold Out!



October 18-20, 2006
Chateau Lacombe
Edmonton

Less than one month to go and Netspeed 2006 is almost sold out! The conference, to be held at the Crowne Plaza-Chateau Lacombe in Edmonton, October 18 - 20, still has a limited number of spaces available. Spaces in the preconference workshops are also still available.

To register, download the conference brochure online at www.thealbertalibrary.ab.ca under "Conferences and Workshops."

All registrations must be received by October 11, 2006.

Correction

Keith Walker, Director of the Medicine Hat College Library, has been elected as Chair of the Community and Technical College Libraries Section of the Canadian Association of College and University Libraries Division. The name of the group was incorrectly mentioned in the last TAL Tales issue. We apologize for any misunderstanding this may have caused.

Mark your calendar now for Netspeed 2007!

Netspeed 2007 will be held in Calgary, October 17-19. More information on Netspeed 2007 will be coming soon!

For additional information regarding Netspeed 2006, please contact Christine Bouchier at: cbouchier@thealbertalibrary.ab.ca or call 780-414-0805, ext. 225.

Denis Ducharme to Open Netspeed 2006

The Alberta Library is honoured to have the Honourable Denis Ducharme, Minister of Community Development, to open Netspeed 2006.

Denis Ducharme has been the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Bonneyville-Cold Lake since March, 1997 and Minister of Community Development since April 2006. Minister Ducharme has been a strong supporter of libraries in his constituency and the Alberta library community is pleased to have a champion in the Alberta caucus.



Honourable Denis Ducharme,
Minister of Community
Development



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Upcoming Events...



September

- 21 APLEN Standing Committee (Calgary Public Library)
- 22 Executive Committee (Calgary, Delta Calgary Airport Hotel)
- 25 TAL Online Development Service Committee (Edmonton, TAL Office)

October

- Canadian Library Month
- 6 APLEN Nodes Meeting (Edmonton, Greenwood Inn)
- 17 APLEN Standing Committee (Edmonton, TAL Office)
- 18-20 Netspeed (Edmonton)
- 27 Executive Committee (Edmonton, TAL Office)

November

- 3 LHCADL Standing Committee Meeting (Lethbridge)
- 3 APLEN Technology Training Committee (Edmonton, TAL Office)
- 20-21 Training - Web Awareness, Visunet, VCB (Chinook Arch Library System, Lethbridge)
- 24 Fall Board Meeting (Edmonton, Greenwood Inn)

