

MINITEX

Reference NOTES

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Memorial Day: More than Just a Long Weekend

Beth Staats



General John Logan

When we think of Memorial Day, a lot of us probably think of barbecuing or grilling, working in the yard, having an extra day off work, and hanging out with friends and family. Memorial Day, originally called Decoration Day, is much more than just a three-day weekend. It is a day of remembrance for those who died serving our country. Officially proclaimed on May 5, 1868, by General John Logan, it was first officially observed on May 30, 1868, when flowers were placed on the graves of Union and Confederate soldiers at Arlington National Cemetery. That is why it originally had the name Decoration Day because it was time set aside to honor the nation's Civil War dead by "decorating" their graves with flowers.

On May 5, 1868, Logan declared in General Order No. 11 that:

The 30th of May, 1868, is designated for the purpose of strewing with flowers, or otherwise decorating the graves of comrades who died in defense of their country during the late rebellion, and whose bodies now lie in almost every city, village, and hamlet churchyard in the land. In this observance no form of ceremony is prescribed, but posts and comrades will in their own way arrange such fitting services and testimonials of respect as circumstances may permit. (<http://www.history.com>)

According to Wikipedia, "Professor David Blight of the Yale University History Department, the first memorial day was observed in 1865 by liberated slaves at the historic race track in Charleston." While many cities and towns claim to be the birthplace of Memorial Day, it is difficult to locate the exact origins of the day, though again, Wikipedia states, "The official birthplace of Memorial Day is Waterloo, New York. The village was credited with being the birthplace because it observed the day on May 5, 1866, and each year thereafter..." Then in 1966, the federal government, under the direction of President Lyndon Johnson declared Waterloo, N.Y., the official birthplace of Memorial Day. Most likely Memorial Day had many separate beginnings in cities and town throughout the U.S. and some southern states have set aside a special day to honor the Confederate dead called, Confederate Memorial Day. Memorial Day now encompasses the honoring of all U.S. War Veterans, not just those who died in the Civil War.

Today, Memorial Day is celebrated annually at Arlington National Cemetery. The ceremony includes the placement of a small American flag on each grave. Also, it is customary for the president or vice-president to give a speech honoring the contributions of the dead and lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. About 5,000 people attend the ceremony annually. There were many events in Washington, D.C., this year to commemorate Memorial Day including a concert, parade, a G.I. Film Festival, and a Navy, Air Force, and Vietnam Veterans Memorial.

Check out the latest
Pew Internet report,
"The Internet and
Consumer Choice,"
available at:
http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Consumer.Decisions.pdf

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For more information on Memorial Day history and events visit the following sites:

Discovering Collection

www.elm4you.org

This resource contains a history of the holiday along with over ten audio files discussing Memorial Day from the points-of-view of Presidents, soldiers and reporters.

About.com Memorial Day Events

<http://dc.about.com/od/holidaysseasonalevents/a/MemorialDay.htm>

Memorial Day History

<http://www.usmemorialday.org/backgrnd.html>

History Channel Memorial Day

<http://www.history.com/minisites/memorial/>

ARLD Day – Riding the Swell: Effectively Reaching Our Students

Jennifer Hootman

Held at the Minnesota Landscape Arboretum, once again ARLD Day '08 was a great success. With a near record high number of registrants, the day was kick-started by a thought-provoking and entertaining keynote that presented a refreshing perspective on high-school and college-age student development.



Erin Walsh of the National Institute on Media and the Family titled her presentation *Why Do They Act That Way: Exploring the Adolescent Brain*. She began by discussing how and what parts of the brain develop at particular ages. Core to this discussion was how a child's and adolescent's experiences greatly impact the brain during growth spurts. The

experiences they have during a growth spurt are more important than any other time. Furthermore, Walsh noted that the brain is still developing through the age of twenty. One of the areas of the brain still "under construction" through age twenty is the prefrontal cortex. Walsh explained that the prefrontal cortex is the area of the brain responsible for impulse control, risk assessment, organizing abilities, resolving conflict, and the ability to focus to name a few. Thinking of the adolescent's prefrontal cortex as not yet fully developed can shed light on and improve our interactions with and expectations of our college and university students.

For instance, Walsh stated that we, as adults, can be a "surrogate" prefrontal cortex for our students by making our expectations clear and consistent; choosing consequences that are fitting; carrying through and enforcing the consequences when necessary; being able to negotiate with adolescents; avoiding power struggles; and not sweating the small stuff.

Additional tips for communicating with adolescents and early twenty-somethings included listening; being clear; avoiding generalizations; modeling good communication skills; expecting and tolerating a little bit of "mouthiness"; apologizing when appropriate; avoiding yelling matches or power struggles; and promptly resolving any conflict.

Finally and quite memorable, Walsh stated, "The factor that most protected teens from succumbing to pitfalls was a secure connection to a caring adult."

Not just knowing but understanding the impact of the developing adolescent brain could have some far reaching positive effect on us as we work with college and university students in the library as well as in the classroom.

Of course, ARLD Day did not end with the fascinating keynote speaker, Erin Walsh, but continued with a great selection of breakout sessions including *Capturing the Captive Audience* by Emily O'Connor and Amy Springer of Rasmussen College; *Teaching Web 2.0 to Student 1.5: Effective Methods for Introducing New Information Tools* by Robin Ewing and Melissa Prescott of St. Cloud State University; *The Library Uncatalogued: The Making of an Information Literacy Film* by Anika Fajardo of the College of St. Catherine; and *Visioning a Student-Centered Library: Quick and Easy Methods for Listening to Our Students* by Chris Inkster, Michael Gorman, Jennifer Quinlan, and Rich Josephson of St. Cloud State University.

All breakout sessions were well-attended and engaging. Each session dovetailed quite nicely with the overall theme of effectively reaching our students which harkened back to the enlightening keynote. ARLD Day was time very well spent!

MACHE: 23rd Annual Homeschool Conference and Curriculum Fair

Beth Staats

Once again I made a trip to the 23rd Annual MACHE (Minnesota Association of Christian Home Educators) conference which was held in Duluth in late April. I talked with many homeschooling parents during the two-day Conference who remembered our booth from past conferences. MACHE is the largest homeschool

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conference in the state with an estimated attendance of 4,500 people. We promote ELM and the Cool Tools (Research Project Calculator, MnLINK Gateway, Minnesota Reflections, and My

Health Minnesota ? Go Local) at numerous conference and events, but MACHE continues to be our second-largest event following the Minnesota State Fair. This gives us that rare chance to talk directly with library users. Results of our conversations were similar to the previous years. Homeschooling families are regular and loyal library users, but many had not heard of ELM or the other Cool Tools. The vast majority of families currently use their libraries to check out materials and obtain interlibrary-loan materials which supplement their Internet access at home. I was pleased to hear from several parents about their love and frequent use of MnLINK's Get It! feature.

This year I was lucky to be exhibiting next to a very nice couple promoting Little House Site Tours (<http://www.lhsitetours.homestead.com>). They host excursions to the home sites of Laura Ingalls Wilder. Some of the other 130 exhibitors included Schmitt Music, Discovery Toys, and Phonics Road to Spelling and Reading. Overall, I once again found the MACHE attendees to be gracious, engaging, and very interested in ELM and their libraries. Homeschooling continues to be a popular option for some families and in different segments of our communities, and we encourage you to target some services to meet these needs.

What Are You Listening To?

Kristen Mastel



Since creating *On the Road with MINITEX* podcasts for Reference Services, I have received numerous inquiries as to what podcasts I listen. Well, my main three areas of interest are art, travel and

librarianship. Below is just a sampling of some of my top library-related podcasts to which I subscribe.

ACRL Podcasts: Discussions and interviews with academic librarians and often are expansions of their publications' articles.

LibVibe: Headlines from all over the library world in about 5 minutes a week!

Nancy Pearl Book Reviews: It is a great reader's advisory tool with the expert Nancy Pearl.

NPR StoryCorps: I think this is a great testament to the tradition of oral history and also an example of how we can get to know our neighbors and our country a little bit better through someone else's experiences. (A bit of a stretch for library-related, but I just had to include it because it is so interesting!)

NYT Tech Talk: A weekly podcast on technology (Slate is another good one to which I subscribe).

OCLC PARcasts: A great NEW series of interviews where Programs and Research staff ask industry thought leaders, "What's keeping you awake at night?"

OPAL Podcasts: Technologies, interviews, book discussions and more are covered here.

PALINET: Another network with lots to say about their local members and the national scene.

SirsiDynix Institute: Great recorded webinars from movers and shakers in the industry along with discussions on upcoming technologies.

For even more podcast suggestions, visit the Podcast section of the *Library Success Wiki* at: <http://liswiki.org/wiki/Podcasts>

What are your favorite podcasts? Let us know by commenting to this post, at: http://blogs.minitex.umn.edu/reference/2008/05/whatare_you_listening_to.html

April M.O.R.E. Webinar Training Participants

Kristen Mastel

The six participants led energetic discussions and demonstrations regarding the reference interview, ELM databases, online searching, virtual reference and many other topics. Each completed thorough pre-work and post-work for every session. Often participants referred to their readings in class discussion or tied them into their demonstrations. This class was exceptional because it was the first time MINITEX has offered a training session via both VOIP (Voice over IP) and telephone at the same time. The participants were very patient as we all troubleshooted the new technology.

Since we meet virtually, rarely do I have the opportunity to meet the participants in-person, but one of the attendees made a point to introduce herself at ARLD Day for some face-to-face time; a rare treat! Some of the comments attendees provided on the sessions were: "Each demonstration of a database was extremely helpful to me. In addition the knowledge each person shared was insightful, going into an area I was not aware of." "I appreciate that Kristen got everyone involved.

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My only regret is that I would have liked to spend a little more time on this series. My employer might disagree with that! Eight hours is probably a good balance.”

Congratulations on a fabulous collaborative learning experience!

April 2008 participants included:

Anne Prinsen (Grand Marais Public Library)

Carol Gardener (Argosy University)

Jane Bethel (St. Olaf College)

Jo Flanders (St. Cloud State University)

Kim Staley (Capella University)

Rita Ann Ferraro (Century College)

Space is limited to 8 participants per series. Slots are still available for the July M.O.R.E. webinar series. To register, visit: <http://www.minitex.umn.edu/events/training/>

Media Specialists Matter

Kristen Mastel

Over the past month I have had the pleasure of visiting two local schools as part of our site visits and teacher/student outreach. The first, Jefferson High School in Bloomington, was the subject of a site visit and podcast with the media specialist, Connie Van Blarcum. The second, Cleveland Middle School in St. Paul, is where I presented at Career Day on what it was like to be a librarian and combined a site visit with Jeanne Badman, TA, and Julianne Ninteman, EA.



Van Blarcum engaging the students during instruction

Mid-April I had the opportunity to sit down with Connie Van Blarcum at Jefferson High School to discuss what MINITEX could do for media specialists. She is a strong supporter of MINITEX already. Van

Blarcum attends many of our teleconferences and other professional development opportunities and has used MINITEX Reference Services to refer reference questions numerous times. Their media center is a strong user and promoter of the ELM databases and incorporates them into various information literacy projects with students and staff. It was a fascinating two hours spent touring the library and producing a podcast on how she uses and LOVES services MINITEX provides.

Their media center was completely remodeled five years ago. One fun fact about the remodeling is that students and staff

assembled all the tables and office furniture. The money they saved from that labor was put towards a concrete patio that students use when it is nice out. Also, the students can check out thirty plus laptop computers, flash drives, camcorders, and other electronics.

Van Blarcum accredits a lot of her success to hard work and showing a genuine interest in the success of the students and staff in all areas of their life; this is why chances are good that you will see her at a sporting or arts event. Van Blarcum noted, “That is where connections are made, often after-hours.” Being a former English teacher Connie still leads numerous field trips to the University of Minnesota Libraries and even to far-off destinations like Italy! Their collection is large, and on our tour, we stopped at the periodicals where a majority of titles are “fun” magazines. She explained, “I just want them to read,” and many of the research-based journals they can access through ELM.

She also invited me to participate in an instruction session. Since I have experience in an academic library, Connie asked me to play the role of what higher education institutions expect from their students’ research. We discussed the pros and cons of using Google, Wikipedia and subscription databases. It was a fabulous meeting with a media specialist that truly loves what she does, and it shows. (To hear more about our visit, see the podcast link at the bottom of the article.)



Jeanne Badman, TA and Julianne Ninteman, EA

In May, I visited two very passionate assistants in the media center at Cleveland Middle School. Badman and Ninteman have tremendous enthusiasm for what they do. However, since their combined hours next year make less than one full-time appointment, it makes reaching all the students’ and teachers’ needs a constant struggle. They are experiencing this pervasive struggle where budget crises are

resulting in drastic cuts in hours for library media specialists and assistants. This effects their time to teach proper citing, research, and plagiarism, which is occurring more and more as their hours are reduced. The media center really is the students’ library as the staff explained that many of the students cannot get to a public library because of a lack of public transit or their parents’ work schedule and lack of a home computer.

They graciously took a few moments of their day to give me a tour and share some of their experiences. They make the most of their hours by helping students with projects on over fifteen computers in the library and suggesting books and

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databases for reports. They also make a constant effort to reach out to teachers during staff meetings in the morning which unfortunately correspond with often the only time students have to use the media center. So, they usually cannot attend. In such a climate, however, they are making strides. Every morning a flock of thirty to forty students rush to the media center to compare homework, use the computers and check out materials. Homeroom and other periods are bustling with action. Amidst an inventory, they take time out for every student that walks through the door. My favorite story they shared with me was when a student came in looking for a book on "gender." The assistants held back their chuckles as they learned that the student really needed another *genre* book.

After our brief site visit, I presented at Career Day for Cleveland Middle School on what it is like to be a librarian. It was a great group of students in the three periods I was there. There were lots of questions on what I like/dislike about being a librarian and what schooling one would need to be a librarian. We all had a good laugh in one the sessions I was presenting. The audience was a group of students who were ESL/ELL learners. I asked, "What local library do you go to?" There was a giggle in the group and some whispers. The teacher quickly snapped their attention back only to find that the students who were Spanish-speaking thought I said *loco* library - meaning *crazy* library. We all got a good laugh about it.

I also used a new set of audience response clickers with one group. They were a HUGE hit! It took a while for me to get used to it on my PowerPoint such as when to allow feedback and when not to. But they were so attentive and patient as they waited for the next slide to appear where they could respond to a question with their clicker.

It was a fabulous day of meeting students, teachers and the media center staff that support them. If only more days could be spent visiting with library staff; it truly is the highlight of my position.

To hear more about Connie Van Blarcum and her projects and of which MINITEX opportunities she takes advantage; please listen to our podcast at: http://blogs.minitex.umn.edu/reference/2008/05/media_specialists_matter.html

Art Libraries Society of North America Conference

Kristen Mastel

Prior to the Art Librarian Society of North America Conference in Denver, I assisted in adding content for the Web 2.0 Tech Kiosk. At the conference I staffed the booth, answered questions on Web 2.0 tools, and demonstrated those tools, along with creating first-time accounts for participants. Rebecca Cooper, a colleague and the Kiosk coordinator, from The Society of the Cincinnati Library, created wonderful MOO Cards and other handouts that had our wiki URL and a place to write down login information for newly created accounts. It was a wonder-

ful experience with approximately 120 participants visiting over two days. Also, we got some major press from the closing speaker, David Silver, on literacy. He was fabulous speaker and used us as an example in his blog post as a basis for his presentation. You can read his post at: <http://silverinsf.blogspot.com/2008/05/literacy-e-literacy-me-literacy-we.html> Feel free to browse our wiki to learn more about Web 2.0 technology, <http://artlibrary-tech.pbwiki.com/>.



Big Blue Bear and Me- my favorite piece of public art in Denver- the artist was capturing the curiosity of a child with thinking outside of the box.

I attended a three-hour workshop on Maps and Atlases at the Denver Public Library lead by two map librarians and one art librarian. We learned the basics of reading a map, such as projection, coordinates, title, direction, scale and legend. I learned that with maps it is best to start narrow (look for the most specific area/location) and then broaden it if you cannot find the information you are seeking. Also, the scale of 1:24,000 is the USGS most common scale to get the most details. Participants

played with Google Earth and Terraserver along with learning about a great FREE resource. A map collector in California, David Rumsey, is digitizing his entire collection of over 17,000 historical maps for free educational use. You can find this site at: <http://www.davidrumsey.com/>

Kristi Jensen, University of Minnesota Libraries Map Librarian, and I hope to create a short workshop using the ARLIS workshop as the basis, so stay posted! Also, don't forget that MINITEX Reference Service has access to the U's Map Library and we use it to answer numerous genealogy questions using the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps and the Andreas maps. Additional highlights from the conference can be read on the Reference Services blog at: <http://blogs.minitex.umn.edu/reference/>

AskMN – Minnesota's Statewide Cooperative Virtual Reference Service

Carla Steinberg Pfahl

Since our launch back on March 24th, AskMN, Minnesota's statewide cooperative virtual reference service, has received more than 250 questions from residents and students across Minnesota. We are receiving many different types of questions and seeing interesting trends of activity for both the public libraries queue and the academic libraries queue.

Based on the types of questions being asked, we are grouping them in the following categories (from most popular types of questions to those less frequently received):

- Subject Specific Research
- Resource

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- Circulation
- Library Information
- Technical Problem
- Feedback or Non-Question

And, we've found that the busiest time of day for asking a question:

- For the academic queue is between 10 a.m.–4 p.m. and 9 p.m.–midnight.
- For the public queue is between noon – midnight.
The average length of a session is about 15 minutes for either the public or academic queue.

So, from this information, we can say that, within 15 minutes of online interaction with patrons, we are able to assist in directing them to more information or answering their question.

AskMN provides patrons with another choice in getting assistance from the library in a convenient and informal setting at their time of need.

Congratulations, Carla!

Carla Steinberg Pfahl and her husband are adding another member to their family. They are adopting a beautiful baby boy. We wish them all the best as they embark on this journey together. Carla will be out on leave for several months. Please continue to send all reference and ELM questions to mtxref@umn.edu and all AskMN inquiries to Mary Parker at mpark1@umn.edu.

REFERENCE NOTES

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