Fight for Libraries as You Do Freedom

By Karin Slaughter

My father and his eight siblings grew up in the kind of poverty that America doesn’t like to talk about unless something like Katrina happens, and then the conversation only lasts as long as the news cycle. His family squatted in shacks. The children scavenged the forest for food. They put cardboard over empty windowpanes so the cold wouldn’t kill them.

Books did not exist here. When your kids are starving, you can’t point with pride to a book you’ve just spent six hours reading. Picking cotton, sewing flour bags into clothes — those were the skills my father grew up appreciating.

And yet, when he noticed that I, his youngest daughter, showed an interest in reading, he took me to our local Jonesboro library and told me that I could read any book in the building so long as I promised to talk to him about it if I read something I didn’t understand. I think this is the greatest gift my father ever gave me. Though he was not a reader himself, he understood that reading is not just an escape. It is access to a better way of life.

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Media Matters
A newsletter for people who care about Library Media Programs

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Author Carmen Deedy and Principal Suttiwan Cox of DeKalb PATH Academy.

If you could only sense how important you are to the lives of those you meet how important you can be to the people you never dream of. There is something of yourself that you leave at every meeting with another person. ~ Fred Rogers
But, why do we need to read? It’s not a survival skill. Contrary to how some of us feel, we won’t die if we can’t read. I think the need for reading boils down to one simple issue: Children are selfish. Reading about other people creates a sense of balance in a child’s life. It gives them the knowledge that there is a world outside themselves. It tells them that the language they are learning at home is the key to unlocking the mysteries of the greater world.

Reading develops cognitive skills. It trains your mind to question what you are told, which is why the first thing dictators do when they come to power is censor or ban books. It’s why it was illegal for so many years to teach slaves to read. It’s why girls in developing countries have acid thrown in their faces going to school.

You would just as soon cut “Romeo and Juliet” from a high school curriculum as you would cut algebra. Both train young minds how to think in critical ways. Both foster problem solving and spatial reasoning. Both create adults who question and contribute to society. Fundamentally, reading creates better societies. This is not a theory. This is a quantifiable fact: There is a direct correlation between the rate of literacy in a nation and its success.

This is why the funding of American libraries should be a matter of national security. Keeping libraries open, giving access to all children to all books is vital to our nation’s sovereignty. For nearly 85 percent of kids living in rural areas, the only place where they have access to technology or books outside the schoolroom is in a public library. For many urban kids, the only safe haven they have to study or do homework is the public library. Librarians are soldiers in the battle for our place in the world, and in many cases they are getting the least amount of support our communities can offer.

We need to shift our national view of libraries not as luxuries, but as necessities. When tragedy strikes in other nations, Americans are generous, but our libraries are being hit with a tsunami and there has been no call to action. Staffs are being fired. Hours are being cut. Doors are being closed. Buildings are being razed. Kids are being left behind. Futures are being destroyed.

Libraries are the backbone of our educational infrastructure, and they are being slowly broken by bankrupt municipalities and apathetic politicians. As voters and taxpayers, we have to demand that our local governments properly prioritize libraries. As charitable citizens, we must invest in our library down the street so that the generations serviced by that library grow up to be adults who contribute to not just their local communities, but to the world.

Kids who read become students who do well in school. Students who do well in school go to college. College students graduate to good jobs and pay higher taxes. Libraries don’t service only Democrats or Republicans. They don’t judge by class, race or religion. They service everyone in their community, no matter their circumstances. Rich or poor; no one is denied. Libraries are not simply part of our guarantee to the pursuit of happiness. They are a civil right, the foundation upon which time and time again the American dream has been built. If we lose our libraries, we risk losing our communities, our families and ourselves.

Karin Slaughter of Atlanta is a novelist. Reprinted with permission from the author.
On behalf of

Kennesaw Mountain High School

Sherri Holcomb and Nan Lanford cordially invite you to our

2010-2011 Exemplary High School Media Program Open House

Tuesday, March 15, 2011
9:00 a.m. — 4:00 p.m.*

* Morning car traffic will be heavy from 7:45 until 8:30 and dismissal traffic will be heavy from 3:15 until 3:45 so you will want to avoid arriving/departing during these times.

Kennesaw Mountain High School
1898 Kennesaw Due West Rd. NW
Kennesaw, GA 30152
678-594-8190 x. 227
Blog: kmhs.typepad.com/media_at_the_mountain/

Highlights
• Class instruction
• Student work displays
• Light refreshments

All are welcome
RSVP appreciated
E-mail: Sherri.Holcomb@cobbk12.org
Nan.Lanford@cobbk12.org
Cyber Security Emerging Trends and Threats for 2011

The year 2010 was another busy year for cyber security professionals and end users, as we faced a number of cyber security incidents and events. Twenty million new strains of malware were created (including new threats and variants of existing families) in 2010, the same amount as in the whole of 2009. The number of malicious websites identified in 2010 increased more than 100% from 2009. More than 11 million records were involved in data breaches in 2010.

Mobile Devices

The growth in the use of mobile devices—and the applications being deployed on them—will continue, making these devices increasing targets for cyber criminals. Experts predict that threats for the mobile operating systems will increase significantly this year.

Botnets and Malware

As the automation and sophistication of botnets increase, they will continue to proliferate. Estimates are that 95% of the world's spam is generated by botnets, infecting approximately 100 million computers. Researchers are uncovering close to 100,000 new malware samples a day, making it increasingly difficult to protect against the high volume.

Hactivism

Attacks carried out as cyber protests for a politically or socially motivated purpose are expected to increase. Some suggest that the recent WikiLeaks is a precursor of similar types of activities to come. Attack campaigns, such as those initiated by Anonymous group and Operation Payback, spam campaigns, and Distributed Denial of Services (DDoS) will continue to gain popularity, despite attempts to criminalize these acts.

Exploits of Social Media

Social media sites will continue to be attractive targets for cyber criminals. The volume of users, along with the amount of personal information they are posting, is increasing exponentially. This combination provides a “petri dish” for social engineering and other scams. Sites that use URL-shortening devices will be of particular concern this year, as these shortened URLs make it easier for cyber criminals to direct unsuspecting users to malicious sites. McAfee estimates more than 3,000 shortened URLs per minute are being generated.

Application Vulnerabilities

- Too many applications are deployed without adequate security controls. As more applications are developed and deployed across multiple platforms, cyber criminals will increasingly target these applications to gain access to data, due to vulnerabilities attendant in the applications.

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Cloud Computing

The move to cloud computing will continue as organizations strive to save money and add flexibility to their operations. Due to the aggregate volume of data that is resident in the cloud computing environments, we anticipate that it will be a target that will attract cyber criminals. They will identify new methods to infiltrate these environments and gain access to data.

Increasing use of Apple Macintosh Computers

As the use of Apple Macintosh Computers increase, they may become larger targets for cyber criminals looking to take advantage of a growing pool of users and exploit potential vulnerabilities in the operating system.

What Can You Do?

- By using sound cyber security practices, users and organizations can strengthen readiness and response to help defend against the myriad challenges, and mitigate potential impacts of incidents.

- Make sure that you have encryption and password features enabled on your smart phones and other mobile devices. Use strong passwords, ones that combine upper and lower case letters, numbers, and special characters, and do not share them with anyone.

- Properly configure, update, and patch operating systems, browsers, and other software programs.

- Use and regularly update firewalls, anti-virus, and anti-spyware programs.

- Be cautious about all communications; think before you click. Use common sense when communicating with users you DO and DO NOT know. Do not open email or related attachments from untrusted sources.

- Don't reveal too much information about yourself on social media websites. Depending on the information you reveal, you could become the target of identity or property theft. Be wary of scams, such as fake profiles designed to exploit your trust.

- Organizations considering a move to a cloud-based environment should fully research the risks and benefits of cloud computing before moving to that environment. It is critical that your security requirements are addressed in contractual agreements in advance.

- Allow access to systems and data only by those who need it, and protect those access credentials.

- Follow your organization's information security policies, and report violations and issues immediately.

It's very hard to determine the credibility of quotes on the Internet. ~ Jane Austen
Continued from previous page

For More Information:

Georgia Tech InfoSec Center

McAfee List of Targets for Emerging Threats 2011
http://newsroom.mcafee.com/article_display.cfm?article_id=3711

Panda Labs Security Trends for 2011

Websense 2010 Threat Report
http://www.websense.com/content/threat-report-2010-introduction.aspx

Vision without action is a daydream. Action without vision is a nightmare. ~ Japanese Proverb
Kindle Fever

Gwinnett County’s Osborne Middle School has Kindle fever! Students are checking Kindles in and out at record speed from the school’s Media Center. The total number of Kindles in circulation is now up to 58, but the waiting list of students continues to grow.

The Kindle enthusiasm began when Louise Doughty, the media specialist, and John Campbell, the principal, submitted a proposal to the school Media Committee for students to check out eBook readers. After receiving Media Committee support, Ms. Doughty and Mr. Campbell researched the pros and cons of various eBook readers. They decided on the Kindle particularly for the text-to-speech feature, the numerous font sizes, and the ease of use.

Ms. Doughty then submitted a request to the school system’s Research and Development Office to purchase Kindles to ensure they would not affect the system’s network. The R&D team restricted the option to the Basic Kindle Wi-Fi model with the agreement that students would not use the wireless function.

The only obstacle at this point was to locate funds for the eBook readers. Mr. Campbell and Ms. Doughty approached the school PTA Board and asked for initial funds to purchase 30 Kindles as a pilot project at Osborne. The Board overwhelmingly voted to make the purchase and 30 Kindles were ordered immediately. A selection of twenty-five recommended and in-demand titles were purchased online and transferred to each Kindle.

Meanwhile the Media Committee created a Kindle User’s Agreement for students and parents to sign before the checkout process could begin. In addition to keeping the wireless function turned off, students (and parents) had to agree to pay a damage/replacement charge for the total cost of the Kindle if necessary.

Kindle checkout began in January 2011 and names of students were drawn from a waiting list to be the first group to check out a Kindle. The circulation time was set for a one-week period. However, it was immediately obvious that 30 Kindles could not keep up with student demand. Mr. Campbell and Ms. Doughty went back to PTA in February to request additional purchases. The Board approved another 28 Kindles to be ordered right away.

The Kindle project has renewed reading enthusiasm at Osborne. Several students have purchased their own Kindle and bring it to school when they have time to read.

Students are reading, sharing, and requesting more eBooks and - yes - hardcover books to enjoy. Conversations about books have become as numerous as the books themselves.

The 21st century student is learning the love of lifelong reading. Kindle fever is here to stay!

Louise Doughty
Osborne Middle
Gwinnett County
Video projects!

Those words simultaneously inspire feelings of dread and delight in me. Dread because as a media specialist, I am so often the troubleshooter at our school for anything video related and am bombarded with questions like: How do you edit this? How do you put a song right there? Where is my video, and why does Windows MovieMaker hate me?! Conversely, I feel delight because some of the more successful video projects I have seen are so wonderfully inspiring. I am constantly amazed at the high quality work that some of our students are able to produce using a video camera and a simple editing program like Windows MovieMaker. However, I never would have imagined having to deal with the sheer volume of these projects just a couple of years ago.

When I first arrived at Richmond Hill High School in 2008, we had four video cameras available for student and teacher use. Those consisted of two MiniDV and two Digital8 camcorders. The student news crew borrowed the cameras pretty regularly, but besides that, they weren’t routinely used for anything besides coaches filming sports. All that began to change, however, when we purchased four Flip Ultra video cameras that fall.

There are several incarnations of the Flip now, but we started with the 60 minute, standard definition models that use AA batteries. The response was almost immediate. It’s not that the actual video quality was better than our older camcorders. If anything, the sound didn’t pick up quite as well. Plus, you either had to load the Flip software on each computer in order to play and edit the clips, or you had convert each video using a program like Prism Video Converter to enable playback on all computers. Simply put, it sometimes took fewer steps using the old camcorder to get the video off the camera.

None of that mattered, though, because suddenly, filming became very easy and very cool in the eyes of teachers and students alike. The Flip cameras are small, stylish, and super user-friendly. Suddenly, tech-phobic teachers were signing up to use them and commenting on how easy and intuitive they were. Students agreed and loved how they could quickly click through, view, and/or delete clips immediately.

With the older cameras, either the student or I had to capture the video, and the video captured in real time. Therefore, if the video was an hour long, it took an hour to get it off the camera. Also, kids routinely lost their place on the tape and either filmed over important footage by accident or had a hard time finding the film they shot. Enter the Flip Video camera, and suddenly those problems were eliminated. With these types of pocket video cameras, there are no tapes or discs required for filming, and you can transfer your video files to a computer almost instantaneously. With one touch of a button, you can even upload your video directly to Facebook or YouTube!

Looking ahead, I don’t think we will ever again purchase the conventional, tape-based cameras. However, I’m not loyal to the Flip alone. Personally, I have a Kodak Playsport HD camera. It is quite similar to the Flip Video camera but is waterproof and takes and SD or SDHC memory card. Honestly, I like the idea of expandable memory and am toying with the idea of getting Kodak pocket video cameras in our next round of camera purchases. If you are looking to launch or revitalize your AV equipment, I would suggest putting these types of cameras at the top of your shopping list. They’re cheap too; you can get a PlaySport or a Flip Video camera for just a little over $100. In any case, one thing is for sure: Digital is the way to go!

Annie Kiene, High School Librarian at Richmond Hill High School  Richmond Hill, GA
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The Queens Public Library System has a "Read Down Your Fines" program that seems highly successful with kids of all ages. The students check in at the desk and just read - anything they want to read. When they are through reading, they check back in with the desk. They read down a dollar for every half an hour spent reading. The library instituted this program because youth were not coming to the library if they had fines. They often couldn’t afford to pay for the fine so they just stopped checking out books.

Barbara Stripling
Director of Library Services
New York City School Library

If you want to build a ship, don't drum up people to collect wood and don't assign them tasks and work, but rather teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea. ~ Antoine de Saint-Exupery
10 Tedx Talks that Teachers Should Watch
The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) listed TED in the last Worthy of Note, and one of their online leaders suggested that SREB point up these ten videos that have been compiled by a teacher who says, “When you watch the talks you are infected by the passion for learning. The speakers are entertaining, thought-provoking and serious about teaching the audience…I will say that each TED talk has given me the knowledge and motivation to do better and be better next year.”

SLIME Kids (School Library Media Kids)
School Library Media Kids, an innovative new site packed with games and book trailers, is designed to provide a fun, interactive learning experiences to get students motivated to learn on their own! Students can choose from exceptional literacy-related resources such as author and book review websites as well as superb educational tools including reference works and search engines.

The ache for home lives in all of us, the safe place where we can go as we are and not be questioned. ~ Maya Angelou

Cool websites
http://www.43things.com List your goals and cheer on others
http://www.librarything.com/ World’s largest book club
http://creativecommons.org/ A nonprofit organization that develops, and supports legal and technical infrastructure that maximizes digital creativity, sharing, and innovation
http://www.guysread.com/ A web-based literacy program for boys. Their mission is to help boys become self-motivated, lifelong readers.
http://themoonlitroad.com/ Strange tales of the American South.
The 11th annual National Book Festival, organized and sponsored by the Library of Congress, will become a two-day event this year. The festival will be held on the National Mall between 9th and 14th Streets on Saturday, Sept. 24, 2011, from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and on Sunday, Sept. 25 from 1 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., rain or shine. The event is free and open to the public.

What a wonderful thing to celebrate - books and reading!

http://www.loc.gov/bookfest/

No entertainment is so cheap as reading, nor any pleasure so lasting. She will not want new fashions nor regret the loss of expensive diversions or variety of company if she can be amused with an author in her closet. ~ Lady Montagu, providing advice on raising her granddaughter, 1752

Do your little bit of good where you are; it's those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world. ~ Desmond Tutu
Freedom Middle School (Cherokee County) Open House will be held on Wednesday, April 27 from 9:00-11:30 a.m.

Crabapple Middle School (Fulton County) on March 31st from 1:00-3:00

Check out how Dale Lyles (Coweta County) celebrated Dr. Seuss’ birthday! http://www.dalelyles.com/?p=2370

READING CAVES!

Tony Pope with Karen Beaumont. In background are Gail Gibbons and M.T. Anderson.

From the Children's Literature Conference
Please join us in the
Dodgen Media Center
for an
Open House

Tuesday, 15 March
2011
9:00 a.m—3:30
p.m.

Morning car traffic will be heavy from
8:15 until 9:00. Dismissal traffic will
be heavy starting at 3:30. You may
want to avoid these times.

RSVP appreciated
Susan.Klodnicki@cobbk12.org

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Google Maps
Protecting Children Online

What are the threats online?

Children are spending more of their time online than ever before. According to one study, 8-18 year-olds spend an average of 1.5 hours a day using a computer outside of school. As use of the Internet and online technologies becomes more ingrained into our everyday lives, it is important we ensure that our youth understand how to use these powerful tools and how to protect themselves from becoming cyber victims. Children of all ages face online risks, including the following:

- **Inappropriate Contact:** Children may come in contact with individuals with malicious intent, such as bullies and predators.

- **Inappropriate Content:** Children may be exposed to inappropriate content while online, such as violent or sexually explicit material.

- **Inappropriate Conduct:** Children have a sense of anonymity while online and may do things that they would not do when face to face with someone.

- **Identify Theft:** Because of the perceived sense of anonymity online, children may post personal or identifying information that can then be used by identity thieves.

How do I keep my children safe?

There are steps parents, educators and others who work with children can take to help keep children safe on-line:

- **Computer Location:** Keep your computer in a central and open location in your home. No computers in the kid's rooms.

- **Supervise Access:** Supervise computer access for children and monitor the types of sites visited. Consider using parental control tools on your home computer. These tools are provided by some Internet Service Providers or are available for purchase as a separate software package. You may be able to set some parental controls within your browser. As an example, in Internet Explorer click on Tools on your menu bar, select **Internet Options**, choose the **Content tab**, and click the **Enable** button under **Content Advisor**. (For other browsers, contact the vendor to determine what parental controls are included.)

- **Establish Rules:** Create guidelines for computer use. Include the amount of time that may be spent online and the type of sites that may be visited. Post these rules near the computer.

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• **Personal Information:** Teach children not to post or share personal information such as their photograph, address, age or activity schedule. Create a safe screen name that does not reveal personal information about the child.

• **Web Filtering:** Use web filtering software that restricts access to inappropriate websites and content.

• **Communication:** Maintain an open line of communication and talk to your children about what they are doing online. Encourage children to come to you if they feel threatened online.

• **Cyberbullying:** Teach children not to respond to cyberbullies. Report incidents of cyberbullying to school administrators and local law enforcement when appropriate.

**Additional Information:**

Some resources focused on protecting children online.


• iKEEPSafe Internet Safety Coalition: [http://www.ikeepsafe.org/PRC/](http://www.ikeepsafe.org/PRC/)

• StaySafeOnline: [http://www.staysafeonline.org/content/protect-your-children-online](http://www.staysafeonline.org/content/protect-your-children-online)


• Netsmartz: [http://www.netsmartz.org/index.aspx](http://www.netsmartz.org/index.aspx)

A **suggested list of books for all grades:**

[http://tinyurl.com/bullying-resources](http://tinyurl.com/bullying-resources)

Author Carmen Deedy with some students from DeKalb PATH Academy.
Auburn Elementary School is a small public school in Barrow County, Georgia, with 592 students, 60% of whom qualify for free and reduced lunch. My name is Elise Binder, and I am the school media specialist here at AES.

I have been concerned about the nutritional quality of the food served in our nation’s schools for years. Last summer, after seeing Jamie Oliver’s Food Revolution, I realized that there was something I could do to help our children eat healthier. Just as the children on Jamie’s program couldn’t recognize fresh fruits and vegetables, some of ours couldn’t either.

I decided to teach our children about healthy foods. I wanted them to see and learn about the foods, and taste them as well. I was given permission to offer a healthy foods class this year, so I contacted a local supermarket who is a partner in education and explained the details of the program I wished to offer. They agreed to donate the foods and supplies. I have focused primarily on fruits and vegetables like berries, melons, green beans and broccoli.

Each week when I select healthy foods to talk about, I pick two or three from the same family, or one food that comes in a variety of forms (like canned, frozen, or fresh) so students will be able to compare tastes and vote for their favorite. I select foods that are in season and reasonably priced. One week we learned about grains like wheat and the difference between whole wheat, whole grain and white breads.

Teachers sign up to bring their class to the library for 15 minutes each week to learn about healthy foods. The important part of these lessons is that everyone gets to Touch, Taste, and Vote! Children touch the food and watch a PowerPoint with lots of pictures about its origin, nutritional benefits, preparation, and possible packaging. They also watch a brief video about the food, perhaps showing harvesters at work or how it’s processed in factories.

At the end of every class students and teachers can taste the healthy foods and then vote for their favorite. The week we learned about yogurt, we tried plain low fat, whole milk Greek, and fruit yogurt. No one was surprised when fruit yogurt won with 405 votes, but we were surprised to learn that most fruit yogurt is loaded with sugar because it is made with fruit jam. We now know we need to carefully read labels when selecting our yogurt brand.

At the end of the week, we announce the healthy food winner and one class gets to take the votes and create a graph showing the results, which are displayed in the hall and eventually in the supermarket.
As expected, our children are learning to identify healthy foods and their benefits. What we didn’t expect are the following:

• By allowing the children to taste all these different foods we have expanded their palates. Classes are writing persuasive essays asking our cafeteria manager to offer healthy foods such as winter squash on our lunch menu.

• Children are much more open to trying new foods in this kind of atmosphere. We had a large contingent of picky eaters in the beginning, but almost all of our children will now try the foods each week due, in part, to all of their peers’ positive reactions to the foods, the praise everyone is given for trying the foods, and the privilege of voting.

• Our program is expanding the menus of many families at their children’s urgings. The children love to tell me that they have one of our healthy foods in their snacks or have eaten it for dinner the night before.

• There is a rise in label awareness with children asking their parents to look for non-hydrogenated foods and foods low in sugar, fat or sodium.

• Our parents are as interested in learning about healthy foods as their children. I’ve noticed that every adult who stops in to our library stays to learn about and taste these foods.

**About the author:** Elise Binder is the school media specialist at Auburn Elementary School in Barrow County, Georgia

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The very existence of libraries affords the best evidence that we may yet have hope for the future of man. ~ T.S. Eliot