



# The Progressive Librarian Bulletin

Volume 1, Issue 1

March, 2012

## Welcome to the First PLG Bulletin

This is the first-ever issue of an internal e-bulletin for news related to PLG chapters around North America. This project came about after discussion within the Coordinating Committee about how to increase communication between chapters within the PLG and will continue for a minimum of one year. Hopefully we will have a good response and will be able to continue indefinitely.

The main objective of the bulletin is to highlight PLG chapter activities, encourage more activity at the chapter level, and to use this as a means to coordinate efforts

between chapters that might be working on similar projects or events.

In order for the bulletin to thrive, I will need contributions from the various chapters. Are you planning an activity? Send me an email! And when it is over, write up a report and let the whole PLG know about how it went. Whatever you are doing, no matter how small or locally-oriented, your work is important to the growth of the PLG and to the furtherance of our goals.

Contact info can be found on the right. I hope to hear from you soon!

To submit information to the bulletin, please send an email to Braden Cannon (PLG Edmonton and Coordinating Committee member) at:

**bradenkcannon@gmail.com**

## Motion to Create PLG Bulletin

The Coordinating Committee of the PLG passed the following motion in February, 2012, which led to the creation of this bulletin:

1. The PLG will maintain an electronic news bulletin to contain, not substantial discussions, but brief news items and reports from PLG members and chapters (i.e. a communication tool for PLG as an organization);
2. The e-bulletin is to be distributed via the listserv and posted on PLGnet;
3. The e-bulletin is to be edited by Braden Cannon for at least one year, a pilot project to be considered for inclusion in PLG-CC guidelines after a few months have passed.

**PASSED** February 15, 2012

## Simmons PLG Update

PLG@Simmons had a pretty busy February. We held three events last month:

1) Along with Panopticon (the student art/museum librarian group), we hosted Andras Riedlmayer, who gave a presentation on destruction of/ documentation of cultural heritage in conflict zones (specifically, in the former Yugoslav republics).

2) We invited Millie Gonzalez from REFORMA to discuss REFORMA's activities and the recent anti-intellectual freedom happenings in the Tucson Unified School District for our monthly discussion group (Chewing the Facts).

3) Along with SCIRRT (Student Chapter of the International Relations Round Table), we hosted Shelly Quezada & Elaine Martin for a presentation/ talk concerning their efforts in Liberia (where the Walter Reed Hospital medical library was transferred to the Liberian national university; this event was podcast, so hopefully once that's ready we can

pass that on your way, if you're so interested.)

For March, things look as though they'll be a tad slower (given that we begin the month on Spring Break, even though it's technically still Winter here.) We'll be having an installation of Chewing the Facts, topic tbd. On March 30, we'll be (along with ALA Student Chapter) hosting Virginia Eubanks, author of "Digital Dead End", who will be discussing the issues outlined in her work (concerning the limits of bridging the digital divide as a means of achieving social justice in the information economy). Beyond March, we're hoping to host a panel discussion on prison librarianship, as well as hosting Community Change, Inc., for their "Anti-Racism for Librarians" training seminar. We can certainly keep you posted as developments transpire.

*Reported by Bryce Kieren Healy*

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## Vancouver PLG Update

The Vancouver PLG chapter started meeting about a year ago. We are four graduates of the School of Library, Archival and Information Science, now turned iSchool @ UBC. We have a blog which pinpoints where the group is at theoretically and politically ([plgofvancouver.wordpress.com](http://plgofvancouver.wordpress.com)).

At our last meeting we discussed partaking in some collaborative writing: a few paper ideas have been about immigrant workers and students in the profession and the gender politics of the graduate program.

I was recently in Toronto for the iConference presenting a paper on the relationship between social struggle and social networking, critiquing the implications of social antagonists using the tools to communicate and disseminate information.

Our collective is really a meeting point for critical discourse.

*Reported by Danielle LaFrance*

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## Illinois Library Association Annual Conference

At the Illinois Library Association Annual Conference in October, I moderated a panel which included PLG member Al Kagan of University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, as well as Mary Dixon of the Illinois ACLU and Tom Burke of the National Committee to Free Ricardo Palmera.

The title of the program was "Keeping the Internet Free: Reports from the Front in the Battles to Protect Free Expression on the Internet."

Tom Burke spoke about how Facebook took

down the Free Ricardo Palmera page and the personal pages of three of the coordinators of the Committee; Mary Dixon discussed the partnership of the ACLU and library associations in resisting filtering and censorship legislation, and Al Kagan spoke about efforts within ALA to resist censorship legislation, especially the PATRIOT ACT as well as to support WikiLeaks and Bradley Manning.

*Reported by James Madigan*

## Edmonton PLG Update

The Edmonton PLG has been busy. We are a group of about a dozen library and archives workers and are unique in the PLG in that we are not a student chapter. We have monthly general meetings and have several committees that meet regularly, as well.

On March 28, we are holding an Organizer Training session with the Edmonton branch of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). The IWW offers Organizer Training that focuses on a grassroots, worker-controlled union model based on solidarity and direct action. We wanted to provide this training for PLG members as a way to equip ourselves with the skills necessary to organize at our workplace against potential attacks on the non-profit information sector such as budget cuts, privatization, and de-professionalization.

We have also been planning a panel discussion for the end of April entitled *Common Space: Creating Community in Public Places*. The discussion will focus on asserting the public right to communal spaces and panelists will explore new and renewed uses of public places including libraries, hacker-spaces, and the Occupy movement.

*Reported by Braden Cannon*

## Wayne State University Update

This past September, the Wayne State University PLG chapter hosted a salon on collection management. From the WSU PLG blog ([plgwsu.wordpress.com](http://plgwsu.wordpress.com)):

The theme this month is the use of quantifiable market-based collection curation techniques versus using a critical, socially conscious approach. Are we librarians to determine what collections SHOULD have or to look at statistics of what already checks out? How do we consider invisible minorities such as LGBTQ teens, or anyone else the status quo labels as "non traditional." How do we consider people who don't come to the library but might if they felt there was something here for them (non users)?

*Excerpted from the WSU PLG blog.*

Remember, the Bulletin needs updates from the PLG membership so we can spread the word about all of the good work that we are collectively doing! Got an update? Send it to [bradenkcannon@gmail.com](mailto:bradenkcannon@gmail.com)

## London (Ontario) Update

The London PLG chapter recently posted some interesting discussion topics on ethnicity and gender in libraries that came up at a meeting on March 1. The full post can be found on their blog ([plglondon.wordpress.com](http://plglondon.wordpress.com)), but here are some salient points:

**Should LIS schools be recruiting for a more diverse group of student librarians, to address the issue of how representative librarians are of their community?**

If so, how? If you need a 4 year bachelor degree to enter the program, does this inhibit the goal of attaining diversity? Do graduates of undergraduate programs accurately reflect the diversity of our communities? Do applicants to undergraduate programs accurately reflect the diversity of our com-

munities? Where is the problem?

**How can increased visibility and outreach help solve the underlying issues?**

We discussed how greater visibility of librarians understanding and their role in the library might help more young people see the job as a viable option from a younger age. We also talked about how we can learn ways to increase visibility and outreach from other professions that have faced similar issues with diversity, such as teachers.

*Excerpted from the PLG London blog. For the full discussion notes, refer to [plglondon.wordpress.com/2012/03/06/discussion-on-ethnicity-and-gender-in-libraries/](http://plglondon.wordpress.com/2012/03/06/discussion-on-ethnicity-and-gender-in-libraries/)*