Metropolitan Detroit Medical Library Group

MDMLG NEWS

Fall 2013

MDMLG
40 YEARS

www.mdmlg.org

President's Message from Jill Turner

Happy start of the Academic Year! For some of us, this is the busiest part of our year. We are ramping up for the first day of classes and attempting to finish the projects we started over the summer. For others, the busy season may finally be starting to plateau; the new residents have been oriented and have started their rotations, so there may be a short lull before they start coming in to the library requesting assistance with their research projects. Speaking of research projects, we have a great program coming up September 5th. Misa Mi and Wendy Parrish have been working hard to put together our Fall Program and General Business Meeting. Speakers will be discussing librarian involvement in systematic reviews. I can't wait to hear what speakers Mark MacEachern and Whitney Townsend have to say. This is not a service that UDM currently offers, but it is something that I am interested in and may want to pursue once I understand the full implications and scope of librarian responsibilities.

On another note, as I start my Presidency of this awesome organization, I want to say how thankful I am for the support I've already received from the other members of the Board. As a first time president, it is a little bit intimidating. I've been a member of MDMLG since 2004, so one would think that I have some sense of how the organization runs… and I do, in a broad sense. It is rather like being the passenger in a car rather than the driver. I know where the Library of Congress is located; I've been there several times, in fact, but I've never had to navigate the streets of Washington, D.C. personally. I know where I need to be, but I'm not exactly sure of the turns I need to take to get there. But, lest you have a fear for the future of MDMLG, I assure you, I am not shy when it comes to asking for directions. To carry this simile to its bitter end … I have my GPS (the president's binder) as well as OnStar (members of the executive board) when I need guidance.

So, I thank you all in advance for your assistance and your participation in the organization. I hope to see all of you on September 5th.

Jill Turner
MDMLG President
turnerja1@udmercy.edu

Join us for the September General Business Meeting

When: Thursday, September 5, 2013 from 11:30am-3:30pm

Program Topic: "Supporting Systematic Reviews"

Where: Beaumont Health System, Royal Oak Campus
Administration Building, Classroom 2, Lower level
3601 W. Thirteen Mile Road
Royal Oak, MI 48073
(FREE parking in South Parking Deck)

[Driving Directions](#)

[Beaumont Campus Map](#)

11:30 am-12:00 pm	Registration
12:00-12:45 pm	Lunch & Learn - What We Do to Support Systematic Review Efforts (Discussion facilitator: Misa Mi, PhD, MLIS)
12:45-1:00 pm	Break
1:00-1:30 pm	Business Meeting
1:30-2:00 pm	Break / Refreshments
2:00-3:30 pm	Program: "Librarian Involvement in Systematic Reviews" (Featured speakers: Mark MacEachern, MLIS and Whitney Townsend, MLIS from Taubman Health Sciences Library, University of Michigan)

Lunch options:
Boxed lunches from Potbelly will be available for the cost of $7.00. The Basic Belly Plus includes sandwich (your choice of four options), chips, and an oatmeal chocolate chip cookie. All sandwiches come with lettuce and tomato and a variety of condiments will also be provided on the side. Pre-ordering and pre-payment are required for the catered lunch. Ordering and payment may be found on the registration form. Attendees are welcome to bring their own lunches.

[Pay with PayPal](#)   [Print Registration Form](#)   [MDMLG Meetings Webpage](#)

Please register by Friday, August 23rd. Please consult the registration form in the link above for complete contact information. We hope you can join us!

Wendy Parrish
Misa Mi
MDMLG Programming Committee

REFLECTIONS ON A UNIVERSITY COMMITTEE APPPONTMENT
By Karl Ericson

As a faculty librarian at the University of Detroit Mercy I'm expected to participate both in library committee work and university-wide committee work. As it turns out, one of the first committees that I was asked to participate on was a university committee for the annual Celebrate Spirit Mass held each fall to kick of the school year. This year the Libraries and Instructional Design Studio of UDM was asked to sponsor the mass and the theme we came up with is one that applies to any library at any institution. It is:

Serve Community, Respect Diversity, Enhance Knowledge

Serving our diverse communities, by providing access that they have come to expect to a whole world of knowledge, is a key function of what we do as librarians. Yes, there are many other things that we do in order to keep our facilities operational, orderly, growing, and accessible, but if we want to best serve the wide variety of our users then we must recognize that it is people who come first, then things.

- *Serving Community*

When we serve our various communities, be they students, faculty, staff, the general public, or members of the virtual, global community, we can't assume anything about their understanding of access to knowledge. They may be quite skilled, quite information literate, or they may have a dated understanding of access, or they may have a limited, or even misinformed view of what is available to them and from where. We can't assume based on any specific indicator, not age, race, gender, or level of education. In an online environment we often have even fewer cues and must do double the work to get to a point of understanding. As well, we must be ready to quickly assess what level of understanding our client is operating at and how much help are they willing to receive.

I'm tempted to throw in a couple of clichés: you can't teach an old dog new tricks (patently untrue!); you can lead a horse to water, but…you know the rest. There are certainly tiny bits of truth in each, but the end results of our work with a customer depend on the willingness of the old dog and the thirstiness of the horse. We can't determine such things, but we can make the attempt to engage them from whatever point they are at, attempting to bring them into a fuller understanding of the scope and limitations of the information available to them.

- *Respecting Diversity*

Respect is a two-way street and the pavement is built by quickly establishing a relationship and over time building trust into that relationship. Often I find myself extremely busy with the various tasks of librarianship that take my focus away from direct customer service. However, many times I can make the time to personally assist in the collection of a bibliography, or with the specific needs of a doctor in need of a literature review on some obscure subject matter. While at times I find that I'm able to work with a client in order to help them become a little more self-sufficient, other times it's clear that the best way to meet their needs and expectations is to assemble the information for them.

Many times a client may come in with certain expectations and part of my job is establishing appropriate boundaries about what my role is and how the transaction is to take place, but at no time does this mean I should step outside of the realms of what it means to provide excellent customer service. That is, whether face-to-face, on the phone, or online, the client is treated as the most important concern at that time and all my energy is devoted to that person, even if there are several of them. This juggling act is one I'm sure we're all familiar with. It takes a lot of energy, it takes a lot of practice, it takes a certain kind of pacing, and it takes a lot of patience.

My approach is, of course, different depending on who I'm working with. But, at all times my aim is to serve such that the needs and expectations of any client are met, while my role as facilitator, teacher, and librarian are respected and, hopefully, appreciated. This approach is one I employ regardless of the position, disposition, or any other identifying characteristic, or lack of identifying characteristics (when online) of the client I'm working with. I truly feel it is my duty to accept and respect diverse learning styles, types of abilities, personal temperaments, social and cultural backgrounds, or any other characteristic that comes into play during my interactions with a client. Additionally, I need to be fully aware of my own biases and work to ensure that they have little or no bearing on the work I'm doing with a client.

- *Enhancing Knowledge*

Sometimes it's obvious how the work we do helps to further knowledge creation and dissemination. For instance, when we help assemble information for a systematic review, or when we help faculty with citations for an article to be submitted for publication. Other times, our contribution is more along the lines of helping to further enhance a client's personal knowledge of a subject area, or of their access to a world of information previously unknown to them, or of simply facilitating the introduction to a tool that will greatly enhance their ability to quickly assemble and utilize citations. In every area where we, as librarians, find ourselves working, whether behind the scenes, or on the front lines, we are working with the tools and techniques of information professionals with the enhancement of knowledge as our goal. Our collective knowledge transforms the interactions we have with others and in turn transforms their own understandings and from that transformation emerges knowledge. Should we take it one step further, risking grandiosity, we could say that our work contributes greatly to the wisdom of the ages.

The library has an important role of service at each of our institutions, diversity is our reality, and enhancing knowledge is a daily opportunity. When reflecting on the purpose and work of this particular Celebrate Spirit committee I feel I've gained some insight into the highest ideals we possess as librarians and why they matter to our parent institutions. The give and take, the compromise, the hammering out of details, all of the processes of working in a team have left me feeling grateful for the work that takes place day to day in our offices and libraries. All of the work I do, whether individually, or within a group, require that I access the critical tools of patience, compassion, empathy, creativity, and knowledge that have been highlighted within this committee. In fact, these are the tools that are most beneficial in all areas of my life.

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IDEAS ABOUND AT THE 2013 GUIDES XCHANGE
by Courtney Mandarino

On a warm and sunny day in late July, I had the good fortune to attend the 2013 Guides Idea Xchange at Wayne State University. This "unconference", which was attended by about sixty librarians, was an opportunity to learn more about LibGuides and the various ways institutions are utilizing them. Though I was unfamiliar with the "unconference" format, I was at least somewhat familiar with LibGuides, having created several of my own in the last two years. I knew that there was a lot you can do with LibGuides, but I was unsure how to proceed and was eager to hear others' experiences.

So what is an "unconference" exactly? In many ways, it's similar to a typical conference; there's coffee and a meet and greet at the beginning, and then everyone breaks off into the sessions that most appeal to them before briefly coming back together at the end for a quick wrap up. However, an unconference works in a much more democratic fashion. A few weeks before hand, there was a call for proposals for different topics attendees would like to see covered. The organizers at Wayne State insisted that there be no handouts or Power Point presentations. Then, during the opening meet and greet, each of the proposed sessions was introduced, followed by a quick poll to gauge interest. Based on interest, the sessions were assigned a room and a time on the spot. In some cases, similar topics were combined into a single session led by two people. In other instances, there was a topic of interest but no one to lead the discussion, in which case an individual was called on to volunteer. Once the schedule was established, the rest of the unconference felt much more like a traditional conference, albeit more inclined toward open discussion rather than a lecture by a single individual.

I really learned a lot throughout the day, but the most useful information came in bits and pieces—I would pick up one interesting tidbit from a session leader, and later learn a useful tip while chatting with someone over lunch. One of the more interesting sessions I attended dealt with using the card sorting method to organize LibGuides. For those unfamiliar, the card sorting method involves writing down each item you want to categorize on a separate slip of paper and giving the stack to a member of your target audience to organize. By doing this, the information is organized in a way that the most sense to the users, instead of relying on how a

One of the last and most well-attended sessions of the day was a discussion of best practices for LibGuides

librarian thinks they should be organized. I found this method intriguing, since we as librarians often have strong feelings about categorizing information but also a strong commitment to user service. During other sessions, it was really the comments that came up during discussion that I often found the most useful. Simple tips, such as disabling comments on boxes that didn't need them or hiding boxes from the mobile display, helped me realize there were many small tweaks I could make to improve my existing LibGuides.

One of the last and most well-attended sessions of the day was a discussion of best practices for LibGuides. When the question was posed to the group as to what constituted best practices for LibGuides, there was an uneasy silence. There was no simple answer, no set of guidelines that would work well for all institutions. What the group did come up with, however, was a list of problems. Users were failing to notice the tabs across the top, leading to problems with navigability. Users did not understand the library lingo, and were unable to determine what a category such as "resources by format" meant. Users did not know how to use the guides to their advantage. Despite these issues, whose solutions would require a lot of trial and error, the group did come up with several general suggestions based on their experiences. Some advocated for changing the name of the LibGuides, as the average user would have no idea what a "LibGuide" is. While many libraries use a name with "guide" in the title, others called their LibGuides "tool kits" or "time savers". Others recommended using pictures to help break up the text and draw the eye to the different elements of the guide. There was also some debate about whether or not welcome pages should be abolished, as these tend to see very little traffic and may not be useful overall. One of the factors everyone seemed to agree on was that there should be some consistency in the format or layout of an institution's guides, even if there are multiple individuals authoring the guides.

While I left the Guides Idea Xchange with a head full of ideas, the overarching message seemed to be that there is no "one size fits all" approach to LibGuides. Instead, the guides should be treated as an ever-changing project that requires regular review and maintenance. There are always new widgets to try and resources to add, instructions that need to be modified and categories that need to be resorted. Just as the needs of an institution and its users vary, so too do the look and functionality of an institution's LibGuides need to vary. Ideas abound about what the ideal LibGuides page should look like, but it was clear at the end of the day that this was a tool that, with a little work and patience, could be of enormous benefit to a library's users.

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Interviewed by the New York Times...

by Sandra Studebaker

MDMLG emeritus member Sandra Studebaker (2001 retiree) scooted out early from the Summer Luncheon and Annual Meeting at Big Rock Chop House in Birmingham on June 13th, here's the scoop:

I was contacted via email the previous day by the Collections Curator of the Detroit Historical Society about participating in an interview for a forthcoming article in *The New York Times* concerning the Society's significant automotive collection. The interview, I understood, was loosely scheduled to occur sometime between 1:00 and 3:00 p.m. on the 13th at Historic Fort Wayne, repository of their automotive collection. Being a bit of a "car buff," I wanted to accept the invitation and see my name in the *Times*, but had been looking forward to reconnecting with MDMLG colleagues, especially the three recent retirees being recognized. What to do? Unable to clone myself, the only solution, which I conveyed to the DHS Contact person, was to depart the luncheon early so I could get to Fort Wayne before 3:00.

A 12:00 noon arrival at Big Rock Chop House provided adequate time for some animated conversation with the new retirees and others at my table. Then, following a less-than-leisurely consumption of my delicious luncheon entree and with boxed dessert in hand, I hastily departed about 2:30 according to plan. Traffic was light on southbound Woodward, so I arrived at the foot of Livernois and West Jefferson just before 3:00.   Elated, I checked in with the Collections Curator, then dismayed to learn that the Times reporter had already left as she and the accompanying photographer had arrived earlier than expected. At least I was treated to a visit with the 1984 Dodge Caravan that I had donated to the Detroit Historical Society in 2004. My "Brown Betty," like other noteworthy cars in the collection, was carefully enclosed in an inflated bubble for protection inside the huge storage facility. I drove home slowly along surface streets through Detroit thinking about the aborted luncheon and missed interview.

But the disappointment didn't last long as the New York Times reporter called me the next day and patiently listened to the "why" behind my decision to donate one of 100 cars deemed pertinent to Detroit history and sought by the Historical Society. She later provided me with the link (below) to the electronic version of her June 19 article, "Anxiety in Detroit over a Prized Car Trove" with numerous accompanying images. The same story, with selected photos of the bubble-wrapped autos, was published in the June 20, 2013 print edition on page B1. My "Brown Betty" was not included among the accompanying photos, but several photos of her were previously available at the DHS website."

How to be Visible in a Virtual World
By Juliet Mullenmeister

The CE course "How to be Visible in a Virtual World: Communications that Work for Today's Librarians" sponsored by MDMLG was held on August 15. It was taught by Dr. Charlaine Ezell of The Extra Edge, based in Haslett, Michigan, covered myriad topics relating to:

- Thinking Like a Customer, Benefits and Satisfaction Factors, How to prioritize services with those things in mind
- The Change Process, People to Influence, Tools to Employ to create influential products
- Interpersonal/Interprofessional presentation and communication strategies

She began the course by demonstrating how we as customers perceive products, and how even a product that is designed well may not immediately convey itself as better, even if it is, because of customer expectation. Customers may need to be persuaded, by creating a feeling of satisfaction with a particular benefit to them, in order to have them feel an intrinsic connection. Benefits are what (products or services) we give the customer, but satisfaction is how the customer feels about the product, process or service. And customers buy in because of how they feel.

The buying-in process often requires a change in process or thinking, and people approach change differently. Some dive in, and some follow more slowly as benefits become more obvious. When making a case for a change process or product, understanding how those particular people approach change or investment is important. By observing who change agents in a particular situation are, we can be more effective in gaining support for our programs. By also keeping track of responses from our audiences, we can be more effective in our communications. Some folks are excited by a new idea; some need to know how it will benefit them to make the change, and some will just never participate. She gave suggestions for ways to figure out how to make your case more effectively, and she cautioned that there may always be folks who you can't persuade.

The last portion of the course covered appearances. Customers react to both how the Library appears and how the staff appears. Bad/old/misplaced signage is a negative to customers, and perceived barriers to staff and product are as well. Creating cozy environments for users as best we can is important. Try to arrange lighting and seating for an optimum of privacy and effectiveness for tasks. Try to make staff visible and open so that users feel less intimidated to interact with them. Arrange desks, computers, and shelved items so that they are accessible and usable, not just filling an area. Be conscious of the fact that bending over to see items on a very low shelf is difficult for many customers.

Dr Ezell also offers a book called "Pass It On: How to Convince People of the Value of Libraries". She can be reached by email ezellc (at) earthlink (dot) net if you are interested in the book.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming Events

October 16-18
MHSLA Educational Conference
Grand Rapids, MI

October 16-18
Michigan Library Association Annual Conference
Lansing, MI

October 28-30, 2013
Internet Librarian
Monterey, CA

January 24 - 28, 2014
ALA Midwinter Meeting
Philadelphia, PA

April 7-9, 2014
Computers in Libraries
Washington, D.C.

May 16-21, 2014
Medical Library Association Conference
Chicago, IL

There's still time to join the Newsletter Committee

Contact Marilyn Dow for details

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