

**Florida Library Network Council**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**August 16-17, 2005**

The following council members were in attendance: Judi Ring, State Librarian, Barry Baker, Mary Brown, John Callahan, James Corey, Danny Hales, Betty Johnson, Richard Madaus, Barbara Stites, and Loretta Flowers. Visitors included Charlie Parker. The State Library staff in attendance included Mark Flynn, Debra Flemming, Sondra Taylor-Furbee, Dan Lhotka, and Alan Nelson. Absent at meeting: Nancy Teger, William Conniff and Joe Stines.

**Mark Flynn** opened the meeting by reviewing the agenda and the informational packet distributed to the Council.

Flynn noted that among other things in the information packet was the corrected February 19<sup>th</sup> Minutes with the corrected final documents.

Flynn announced that Julia Woods resigned from the council because of retirement. Bryan Kelley from Palm Beach Community College has graciously accepted an appointment to the council to represent community colleges. Bryan Kelley will join the Council with its next meeting.

**Judi Ring, State Librarian, made the following remarks.**

**Announcements:**

- Ms. Ring thanked everyone for helping with the LSTA review process. The Division made a decision to fund the K-12 databases. This decision has been well received by the library community, but especially by FAME and the school media community. The Gale Corporation has started the process of registering e have schools for access.
- The budget issues for this year's legislative action are in the planning stages. Last year the funding of \$750,000 for the K-12 plan was put forward with the Governor's approval. Unfortunately the K-12 plan wasn't funded by the Legislature. We were unable to get the Department of State sub-committees to understand why DOS wanted to fund anything for DOE. The K-12 has been funded by LSTA. There is interest in the library community about going to the legislature to fund the total FEL package for everyone and moving it out of the LSTA funding. The Department of State will not put forward a budget initiative for databases or the Florida Electronic Library in the 2006 Legislative session.
- The DOS has gone through a re-organization process. The Assistant Secretary of State Candice Crawford has resigned and will be leaving at the end of July. Before we had the Assistant Secretary Crawford reported directly to Secretary Hood. Under the former organizational structure there were two Deputy Secretaries. One of the deputies was Dave Mann who oversees Corporation, Elections, and the State Library and Archives. Deputy Secretary Judy Pettitjohn oversees the Museum, Historic Preservation and Cultural Affairs programs. Dave Mann has been promoted to the Assistant Secretary of State. This leaves his position as Deputy of Secretary of State vacant which will not be filled. State Librarian Judy Ring will report to Dave Mann.

- The Department of State has a problem with “rate.” Judy explained that without rate you cannot pay salaries for staff positions, even if you have cash to do so. Also, without rate, there an agency cannot give promotions. In 2003 we lost positions, but the Department thought the rate would be kept, but unfortunately this wasn’t true. We are about \$900,000 in the rate deficit for the Department. Unfortunately if the Department doesn’t balance its rate the state will take away the departments ability to do 5% budget transfers. The Governor asked the Legislature to back down legislation setting penalties for agencies who are over rate. The Legislature would not do it. The Department hopes to straighten the matter out in the next session.
- Loretta Flowers gave an update on the LSTA program as it relates to the Florida Electronic Library. The Division seeks to balance funding for statewide programs vs. competitive grants to local libraries. “We have done a good job with local library development but want to keep statewide initiatives in play.” We wish to make sure that there are ample resources to provide dollars to other kinds of innovations and other kinds of library programs. Judy made a statement that we have a number of LSTA grants that we have continued to fund for three or four years. In the past we hope that libraries would phase out their dependence on LSTA funding operational grants. We have looked for that in their proposals. We will be examining this more closely and perhaps set a goal on how many years that we will fund a program. In general there is strong support from Florida public libraries to use LSTA for statewide benefit like database licensing.
- **Jim Corey** wanted to know the trend in growth of LSTA funding in general to support Florida. Loretta said that we are looking at \$300,000 increase annually.
- The Gates Foundation has chosen to fund another round of public access computers for libraries in Florida especially rural libraries. This will allow eligible public libraries Florida to be able to replace computers purchased with Grant funds as part of the first year of Gates funding. The Division will administer the funds and the grant application process. It will be a quick turn around time. Florida is eligible for \$1.2 million dollars in additional funding.

**Council Action: Motion was made to adopt the Minutes of February 19, 2004 Motion passed. Motion was made and passed to include in future minutes a notation regarding when Council members are absent at meetings.**

### **Review of the 2005-2006 Grant Budget**

The FEL grant for 2006-2006 has been approved. A budget comparison was done to show FY 2004-2005 and FY 2005-2006. The program increase was owing to the addition of the \$750,000 licensing fee for K-12 to the Gale Group. This brought the Gale database program from 1.229 million to 1.997 million per year. The “Ask the Librarian” service was reduced by almost a third. Surplus funds were used from last year to forward fund licenses for the current year. It also reflects another decision that was made with our partners to centrally spend funds for marketing and promotion from the overall FEL grant rather than allocating large amounts of funds for promotion and marketing to subgrants.

**Danny Hales** asked about paying in advance for “Ask the Librarian” services. Hales expressed concern about the bracket increase, because the \$750,000 has been discounted by the savings in the Ask a Librarian program. Next year we will still have the \$750,000 expenditure to make and still have the licenses that we will have to purchase in the next year. Ask a Librarian should be at 360,000 this year and maybe pushing 400,000 next year. Flynn said that this was in part true. If we pay the whole licensing cost it would add another \$50k or \$60k to the next year budget for virtual reference. This would increase the Ask a Librarian budget by that amount, but only to about \$340,000 to 360,000.

However, there are factors that could offset this increase in Ask a Librarian. One is the possibility that participating libraries would at some point agree to pay the license cost for their use of the local desk. Also, the 2005-2006 budget year is the second year of purchasing the Ex-Libris portal product. There is one more year of licensing fees to pay and then the cost of that program will drop. The ongoing recurring cost for maintenance of the MetaLib/SFX software is around \$80,000. There is some additional cost for staff support at FCLA. There may also be other costs that we will need to look at by year four like purchasing a new server. But we are still looking at savings by year four of the portal program.

John Callahan asked how to determine if the “Ask the Librarian” service was successful and if we should continue with this in the future. By the usage numbers, it looks like it has had minimum impact statewide. In the marketing and promotional area some of the responses indicated that they had no knowledge of several of these things.

Flynn addressed the concern by stating that we are still in the early stages of building out the infrastructure and this is a program that takes time to catch on. Licensing of the Gale databases for K-12 and our promotion efforts to this community will change the numbers. Other programs in other states have shown that including the K-12 community is essential to increasing the usage numbers. This is true for all the FEL services. The evaluation data shows this clearly. FEL page visits went from tens of thousands to hundreds of thousands resulting from our exhibiting at FAME and other K-12 events. It is extremely important how we promote the K-12. The bulk of our efforts will be directed towards promoting the FEL services overall to K-12.

**Richard Madaus** added that analyses of the K-12 service has included a review of other states’ virtual reference activities. “We are right on track looking at other states services.” Florida made a wise investment and took its time to put the infrastructure in place. We have 85 institutions with reference staff now trained, practicing, functioning and working. This is the foundation in which you will place the K-12 community this Fall. It has been a progressive and an incremental development that is now ready to be scaled up statewide.

**The Council asked that a report be made at the next FLNC meeting on virtual reference and the Florida Electronic Library.**

Flynn mentioned that we have begun the process of getting the grant awards out to our partner institutions including CCLA, FCLA, and TBLC so that the funding is in place to continue programs for the next year.

**The K-12 Initiative: report on activities**

Judi Ring reported on the efforts of Questia to seek state funding for an offering of Web based services for the public K-12. Questia was seeking \$3 million initially. This request did not have an endorsement or approval from any state agency. The Legislature approved \$800,000 for a pilot program involving three school districts. The Districts were not named but were to be chosen by DOE. The Governor vetoed the bill.

Flynn distributed a chart comparing Questia content to the Gale K-12 offering. Questia content is limited. It is not really a virtual library product. The focus is on helping students write. It offers an array of tools to support writing instruction but also includes a small online library. The Questia Web site claims that the service offers 10,000 full text articles and 2,500 online books. When compared to the FEL, the Gale InfoTrac product recently licensed for public K-12 by the Department of State currently offers over 8 million full text sources. The OCLC FirstSearch eBooks database, also available to Florida K-12 through the FEL, offers online access to a much larger number of online books.

Richard Madaus noted that Questia made an excellent presentation to the legislature education sub-committee. The sub-committee found out that \$11 million dollars is spent every year for school books and is motivated to reduce that expenditure by replacing print collections with the Questia online service. Richard also noted that Questia has had a successful project in Indian River County and in the St. Lucie area.

### **Flynn reported on the promotion of the FEL to the K-12 community.**

The roll out of the Gale products to Florida public schools follows the same pattern as the public libraries. School Districts will be asked to register for the service with Gale. In doing so they will provide Gale with IP and other information necessary to establish accounts. Gale will host access to the Gale database resources each school district. Schools have a choice to create their own links to the resources or go through the FEL Web site. At this time, if they choose to use the FEL Web site they will need to have a public library card. Later, with the introduction of MetaLib, we will be able to authenticate public schools and public libraries by IP address. Students will be encouraged to use the site remote by logging in with their local public library card number. Encouraging students to get public library cards remains an important goal of the FEL program.

The Gale Corporation printed 100,000 post card announcements targeting public school educators. The design was done under contract by the Florida Center for Interactive Media at Florida State University. Over 40,000 were mailed out to district superintendents, school principals, and district administrators for curriculum and instructional technology. The post card is also being mailed to all of Florida's district media specialist coordinators.

A K-12 section is being added to the FEL page. The main purpose of the Teacher Post Card is to get the school community to come to the FEL site to learn more about the program and how to register for access. From the FEL site there are links to descriptive information on the FEL, Gale and other database products, technical contact information, and a link to the registration site. Once the school media center administrator finds the Gale registration site, then the Gale technical support folks take over and walk them through the process of getting connections established. The schools can also find additional training support materials at the FEL site including posters and bookmarks and curriculum support materials like lesson plans. Teachers

and students who go to the FEL web before their District has registered are encouraged to begin using the resources by logging on with their local public library card.

On July 19<sup>th</sup> Secretary of State Glenda Hood held a press conference and issued a press release on the expansion of the FEL to the public K-12. The press conference was extremely well attended and generated interest in the press. In addition to the Department of State, the press conference also included speakers from the Florida Department of Education and the District Superintendent from Leon County. Newspapers have used the information provided in the press release and added the local information angle by interviewing their community's school officials. Every time a newspaper reports on the FEL expansion it generates inquiries from that community.

Other promotion efforts include:

- FEL staff are partnering with Nancy Teger to make presentations about the FEL at various K-12 meetings including FAME, FAEDS, FETC and presentations to DOE staff.
- Gale representatives will meet with all curriculum and school media specialists in their counties throughout the State. In addition we have enlisted the support of the Multitype Library Cooperatives to get the word out.
- Gale has also provided Florida with two full time trainers who will travel throughout the state and target media specialist, teachers, and multi-type consortia to introduce the new content and provide assistance to Districts in creating access points.
- Nancy Teger has developed curriculum bibliographic instructional module that all school media centers are to put into place for K-12. It includes tested bench marks linked to the FCAT that is part of the Sunshine State standards. Training will be provided at school district training centers, MLC training facilities and public libraries where appropriate.
- Each school district has its own Master Plan for CE credits based on a point system. These are points that teachers accrue that enable teachers to get recertified without going to college and to take formal courses. Nancy Teger is working with the school districts to get the Gale training made part of each districts master plan for CE. Teachers will receive points towards recertification by attending Gale training.

The last major objective in the roll out plan is evaluation. A survey will be conducted in the Spring to evaluate how effective our promotion efforts have been. Evaluation will include surveys of the school community, including some focus groups, and evaluation of the training efforts. Gale will continue to provide statewide usage data and include the K-12 usage in the statewide reporting.

The FEL will be presenting and exhibiting at major educational association meetings. In October, the FEL will be exhibiting at FAME. Nancy Teger and Mark Flynn will be presenting a program on FEL at the FETC (Florida Education Technology Conference) in Orlando in March 2006. Flynn will also be presenting to media specialists at the annual FAEDS (Florida Association of Educational Data Systems) meeting in Pinellas County.

Charlie Parker, Director of the Tampa Bay Library Consortia and a partner in the Ask a Librarian program, reported on efforts to promote the Florida Electronic Library and the Ask a Librarian service to educators in the Tampa Bay region. In his experience this is the first thing that we have had to present to the school media community in our area. We did workshops that were offered to school districts who aren't members in our area and they are crazy over the FEL. These groups responded very well to the session on "Ask the Librarian", the Gale products, the Florida digital collections, and the Florida memory curriculum support materials. TBLC distributed a brochure about K-12 services with a "Welcome Back to School" message to school media specialists who are in member counties. The distribution was about 700 items. TBLC is not used to printing and mailing out materials of this size. The distribution was very effective.

### **Review of Marketing Survey Report and Addendum to FEL Marketing Plan**

The State Library contracted with the Information Management Use and Policy Institute to conduct a marketing survey via a web based survey to gather information on how to improve FEL marketing and promotion efforts. The study team surveyed local library managers on their knowledge and understanding of the FEL, local library activities to promote the FEL, their opinion on FEL promotion efforts, and to gather suggestions for further promotion efforts.

The findings were not favorable but contained important information for making improvements. As of last spring we found that as a result of our promotion efforts that only 4 out of 10 librarians surveyed had heard about the Florida Electronic Library. Out of the four who had heard about it, only two knew about the services offered by the FEL. This was not the type of penetration that we were hoping to achieve.

The majority of respondents to the survey were public library managers with 60% of the respondents being staff working in public libraries. The survey was a sample of library staff opinion. Respondents self selected whether or not to participate. The staff of the Institute gathered the responses and analyzed them to provide information on planning future promotional activities.

Overall, the promotional efforts that were most helpful to managers were exhibits at professional meetings where librarians could interact with FEL staff. Another valuable activity is providing bookmarks on demand to libraries who request them for local promotional efforts. Press events and making news releases available was also perceived as very valuable.

One of the messages we received from the survey is that public libraries have links to the Gale and FirstSearch resources, but they don't think of them as FEL activities. Librarians are also confused at our efforts at marketing and how they are perceived at the local level. They feel that our efforts may be competing with local efforts to get the attention of the public that they serve with local tax dollars.

Another finding of the survey is that many public libraries will not link to the FEL because of the site's inability to authenticate by IP address and capture local usage data. These limitations will be corrected with the introduction MetaLib and its integration into the FEL site.

In the meantime, the FEL has a lot of great resources that go beyond Gale and FirstSearch. We do have libraries that provide direct link to Gale and FirstSearch, but also provide FEL because

of the other resources available at the site (e.g. Florida Memory, Florida On Florida, Florida Group Catalog, Ask a Librarian and other services that don't require authentication for use).

The FEL staff met with partnering agencies who manage or contribute to these services (TBLC, CCLA, FCLA, NEFLIN) to discuss the findings that are in the survey and try to draft a different approach to marketing that would address some of the issue that are mentioned in the survey. This resulted in an addendum to the FEL Marketing Plan. In addressing these issues the hope is to put us in a better position to promote the FEL site as well as the databases and the Ask a Librarian service.

As the group reviewed the existing marketing plan it became evident that it was focused on implementation. The marketing plan allowed us to be in a position to talk about new services as they were ready. The FEL followed this plan closely. In the beginning the emphasis was on the development of logos, develop promotional print pieces for each service, and communicating about services as they became available. The Marketing Addendum emphasizes a more integrated approach to promotion. The FEL needs to communicate about all of the services as a whole.

### **Mark invited comments and recommendations on the marketing survey report and the Plan Addendum.**

#### **Following are recommendations made by Council members:**

- Public service announcements on radio and television should be pursued.
- The Ask a Librarian program experimented with banner advertising on Web sites. For example, if you went to a local newspaper Web site a banner ad would pop up with a link to Ask a Librarian. These advertisements resulted in ongoing usage during the hurricanes in Florida and without them usage numbers would probably have gone down. We should try this again outside of the hurricane season.
- Direct mailing to librarian staff similar to what was done for the K-12 community.
- More training opportunities for staff -- especially training sessions oriented to specific information topics like health, homework help, etc.
- Develop print promotional material that is focused on topics such as health and wellness, Florida history, and science and the environment targeting specific users. We should try to put together these types of marketing materials and provide them to constituents who serve these specific communities so as to connect the program to people who are looking for this type of specific information.
- Target marketing to genealogy and historical groups—especially groups that organize and run the history and science fairs.

#### **Flynn gave an update on the implementation of the FEL Portal (MetaLib/SFX)**

- The FEL web site is being redesigned in order to integrate the Ex Libris portal software, MetaLib/SFX. The new design will reduce scrolling for information and offer left side navigation providing easy access to the site's contents.
- MetaLib/SFX will add new functionality. The new site will provide users with a subject-based gateway to electronic resources, allowing users to create custom searches across many resources simultaneously (federated searching). It will also

offer access to a Quick Search page that provides searching of groups of databases according to ten topic oriented categories.

- MetaLib/SFX comes with a “knowledge base” that provides access to over 200 new Web accessible database resources in all subject areas.
- Users who access the FEL from a registered Florida public library or public school will be authenticated automatically and will no longer be required to enter a public library card barcode to access resources on site. Florida public library barcodes will still be used to authenticate users for remote use.

A demonstration of the new site was provided to the Council. Rollout for the new site is anticipated for December. After implementation, the FSU Information Institute will conduct usability studies in Florida public libraries in order to test the design and provide public feedback.

### **Review of the FEL Annual Report DRAFT**

The FEL Annual Report DRAFT was presented. This report was prepared by the FSU Information Management Institute. It presents usage data for all aspects of FEL services. The purpose of the report was to develop and test long-term sustainable evaluation methods for data collection efforts of various components of the FEL. The FEL now has a database of usage data that will be collected on an ongoing basis. Flynn sought comments from the Council regarding how usage statistics might be used to share information with stakeholders such as the legislature, library directors, the school community, etc.

Flynn sought comments from the Council regarding the DRAFT. Do we need an Annual Report for distribution to stake holders? If so, what kind of data do we want to share?

Comment from the Council...

- The legislature will not want this type of level of statistical detail. The legislature will only want a single page. It was felt that you could perhaps use this information in other types of forums. Since there are no plans at this time to seek state funding for the FEL, it does not make sense at this time to expend resources for a formal annual report. When it is appropriate to communicate with the legislature, the information needs to be sharp and to the point.
- A report of this nature should only mention a few key things like growth in the use of databases, how much it will cost and what it is being spent for. There should be two reports; one for librarians and one for the legislature.
- Barbara Stites mentioned in addition to the courier service stats it would be very useful to include an annual report from OCLC regarding ILL activity in the State.
- Loretta Flowers suggested that the FEL usage data be summarized and reported as part of the Annual Florida Statistical Report to the library community.
- Whatever form the report takes, it should be made available at the FEL Web site.
- Council members felt it would be helpful if the report would depict future development of the FEL based on current usage—an approach typical of many corporate annual reports.

**The Aug. 16th meeting of the FLNC adjourned at 5:00 pm.**