LIBRARIES AND THE ECONOMY

The American Library Association (ALA) announced in a recent press release that it is asking Congress for $100 million in stimulus funding to aid the nation’s working families during the current economic crisis. Aid is sought to stem the bleeding of critical library services that help Americans with job searches, small business development, financial literacy, and other essential assistance in hard economic times. ALA’s recommendation comes as Congress holds hearings on economic growth and job creation, including a Joint Economic Committee Hearing.

Public libraries are facing the most severe cutbacks in decades as budget shortfalls hit cities, towns and rural areas across the country, according to the Association. Public libraries depend heavily on local property taxes to maintain operations. Across the country increased foreclosure rates, lower home values and fewer sales have sharply reduced available funds. From Los Angeles to Boston, libraries are cutting hours and services; some are even facing the threat of closure at a time when their support is needed most. “America’s free public libraries provide a lifeline for citizens in need across the country,” said ALA President Jim Rettig. “Ensuring Internet access, career workshops, business seminars and other economic support services are vital links in the nation’s financial recovery. This is no time to cut much-needed support, reduce hours or close library doors.”

ALA’s recommendation for stimulus funding seeks support for basic library services across the country as well as specialized assistance to help Americans deal with the current economic crisis. In particular, funds are being requested to:

- Expand critical employment activities and services such as resume development, job bank web searches and career planning workshops;
• Reinstate or supplement evening and weekend hours of operation at libraries to provide the greatest possible access to services;
• Promote financial literacy, housing counseling, and small business development assistance; and
• Acquire additional resources and materials to help keep up with increased demand for economic services nationwide.

Investments in libraries often yield high dividends for communities. Studies show economic returns from salaries and wages paid to staff, construction costs, employment services and library purchases. A recent Pennsylvania study points out that for every dollar invested in the public library, the community receives a return of $5.50. A similar report from Florida shows a $6.54 return on investment.

“Economic studies demonstrate the positive impact of spending in local communities,” said Joe Matthews, an internationally recognized expert on library management with an MBA degree from the University of California, Irvine. “Known as the multiplier affect, every dollar spent in the community will ripple through the economy with an impact ranging from 7 to 11 times the initial spending,” he added. “The proposed stimulus spending for America’s public libraries will have an enormous impact on local economies, helping communities across the country get back on track financially.”

To view this post in its entirety, please follow the link below:
http://www.wo.al.org/districtdispatch/?p=996

BRIEFINGS

Send your news or stories that you would like to share with the library community to the HH editor, Robert Upton, at robert.upton@state.nm.us

Tony Hillerman has died. New Mexico’s beloved Tony Hillerman died October 26 at the age of 83. Recognized nationally as a mystery novelist who used the Southwest as a setting, here at home he was known as a generous man and a willing supporter of the New Mexico library community. Before he became known for his novels featuring the Navajo culture, he worked as a journalist from 1948 to 1962, coming to New Mexico to work at the Santa Fe New Mexican, and later he earned a master's degree from the University of New Mexico, where he later taught journalism and eventually became chairman of the journalism department.

He was born in Sacred Heart, Oklahoma, on May 27, 1925. Although Hillerman was not Native American, his upbringing in rural Oklahoma brought him in contact with Native Americans from an early age; as a boy, he went to a Pottawatomie Indian school.

In 1943, he interrupted his education at the University of Oklahoma to join the Army. He was a decorated combat veteran from World War II, serving as a mortarman in the 103rd Infantry Division and earning the Silver Star, the Bronze Star, and a Purple Heart. He participated in the D-Day invasion and was severely wounded in battle at Alsace, France. He returned from Europe a war hero with a Silver Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, temporary blindness, and two shattered legs that never stopped causing him pain. He returned to the university for his
degree and, in 1948, married Marie Unzer. Together, they raised six children, five of them adopted.

Hillerman was still teaching when he wrote his first novel, Blessing Way, first published in 1970. His first agent advised him that if he wanted to get published, he would have to “get rid of that Indian stuff.”

His two best-remembered characters were Navajo police officers: Lt. Joe Leaphorn, introduced in The Blessing Way, and Officer Jim Chee, introduced in People of Darkness in 1978. Leaphorn was an experienced police officer who understood, but did not share, his people's traditional belief in a rich spirit world while Jim Chee was a younger officer studying to become a “hathaali” – Navajo for “shaman.” Together, they struggled daily to bridge the cultural divide between the dominant Anglo society and the impoverished people who call themselves the Dineh. In 1987, the Navajo Tribal Council honored him with its Special Friend of the Dineh award. He took greater pride in that, he often said, than in the many awards bestowed by his peers, including the Golden Spur Award from Western Writers of America and the Grand Master Award from the Mystery Writers of America, which elected him its president. In 2004 Hillerman won the Los Angeles Times Robert Kirsch Award for Lifetime Achievement, another of his many honors.

Hillerman's commercial breakthrough was Skinwalkers, published in 1987 – the first time he put both characters and their divergent world views in the same book. It sold 430,000 hardcover copies, paving the way for A Thief of Time, which made several best seller lists. In all, he wrote 18 books in the Navajo series, the most recent titled The Shape Shifter. As a consistently bestselling author, Hillerman was ranked as New Mexico's 22nd wealthiest man in 1996.

In a 2002 interview, he told PBS: “When I decided I wanted to be a novelist, I had been a newspaperman for years. I didn't know whether I could develop a plot; I didn't know if I could develop a character. I knew I could describe. I thought, I'll set it on a Navajo reservation so I'll have a good background. If they don't like the story, they can look at the state setting, you know? That's how I got started. The more I knew about [the Navajo], the better I liked them.” The following year, the magazine The Rake asked him what he'd like readers to take away from his work: “Above all I would like them to be aware that the cultures of the people I like to write about, the Navajos and Hopis and so forth, are extremely complicated and extremely interesting – and in the case of the Navajos especially, are extremely valuable. You can learn a heck of a lot from Hopi and Navajo ways of life. For example, the negative value they put on greed, of having more than you need. In their mythology, that's how you identify a witch, the ultimate of evil. They have more than one kind of what we call a witch, they don't use that word. And the fellow who's got money and stuff, and kinfalks who are hungry, it's an almost certain sign the guy's evil. We've sort of left that behind us. We think the homeless person is probably a crook, or dangerous.”

Hillerman thought his 20 years as a journalist served him well. “You really had to sort of take a vow of poverty to be a journalist in the old days. ... I really think working at a newspaper as a reporter has two huge advantages for writers. One, you're writing every day. You learn how to use the language, you learn how to get a paragraph to make sense if you're doing it every day. And also it puts you where the action is, where you're seeing the guy sitting in the defendant's box sweating out the jury. You're at the scene of the crime, you're at the scene of the train wreck, you're dealing with people that are under tension, and I just think you can get a whole head full
of memories of people and things. I wonder sometimes how normal people come up with their good books.”

**Roswell’s Tree of Knowledge.** The Roswell Public Library was honored to dedicate their Tree of Knowledge to the city on October 27. The Tree is a 17 foot-tall sculpture composed of more than 2,800 custom-made tiles made by members of the community to show their love for the library. The tiles include people’s favorite books, authors, and other literary words that are important to them.

The Tree of Knowledge was made possible by the Roswell Interarts Organization and artist Sue Wink who designed the tree and gathered grants, donations, and set up workshops for the public to make their tiles. Each tile is individually made and completely unique, making the Tree unlike any other in the world. The Roswell Public Library celebrated its Centennial year in 2006 and this sculpture is now a permanent reminder of how important the library is to the community.

**Google online book settlement.** Google Inc has reached a legal settlement with authors and major publishers that paves the way for readers to search through millions of copyrighted books online, browse passages and purchase copies. The settlement with the Authors Guild and the Association of American Publishers draws to a close a three-year legal challenge of Google's plan to make many of the world's great books searchable online.

Libraries across the country will be offered an online portal, allowing their patrons to print pages for a fee. Institutional subscriptions will also be available to college students and faculty. See the full article: [http://www.reuters.com/article/internetNews/idUSTRE49R71K20081028](http://www.reuters.com/article/internetNews/idUSTRE49R71K20081028).

**HH notes.** The *Hitchhiker* is about you and your libraries. We depend on you to let us know what is going on at your libraries, and what you like or don’t like about the content of the newsletter. Please help by spreading the word that *Hitchhiker* is back, and by reminding others to send their email addresses so we can notify them each time a new issue is available. Send your news and announcements, and also new and corrected email addresses to robert.upton@state.nm.us

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

*Send event and training announcements for the library community to the HH editor, Robert Upton, at robert.upton@state.nm.us*

**NM Book Awards.** See a full list of the winners of the 2008 New Mexico Book Awards at the New Mexico Book Coop web site, [http://www.nmbookcoop.com](http://www.nmbookcoop.com). Underwriters of the New Mexico Book Awards are *Albuquerque The Magazine*, Borders, Sunbelt Shows/Fiery Foods,

Scholarships offered. The New Mexico International Reading Association is offering two scholarships to graduate students who are enrolled in reading or literacy programs at accredited institutions of higher education. The Miles Zintz Scholarship is in the amount of $1,500 and the NMIRA Literacy Scholarship offers $750. Persons who are interested in detailed information and application materials should contact: jennifer.taylor@demingps.org, harriet_juricich@hotmail.com or call (575) 544-1818. In order to meet deadlines, it is important that persons indicate their interest by November 15.

Google Policy Fellowship Program. The Washington Office of the American Library Association (ALA) will be participating again in the Google Policy Fellowship program for the summer of 2009. The first class of fellows worked for ten weeks this past summer at ALA, Washington and at other public interest organizations involved in debates on broadband and access policy, content regulation, copyright reform, online privacy, and open government. In particular, ALA encourages masters and doctoral students in library and information studies with an interest in national public policy to apply for this fellowship. 2009 will be an especially exciting time to be in Washington.

Those selected as fellows for the 2009 summer will receive a stipend to spend ten weeks contributing to the public debate on technology policy issues – and ALA's fellow will focus on these issues from the perspective of the library community. The participating organizations from 2008 include: American Library Association, Cato Institute, Center for Democracy and Technology, Competitive Enterprise Institute, Electronic Frontier Foundation, Internet Education Foundation, Media Access Project, New America Foundation, and Public Knowledge. Six additional organizations will participate in the 2009 summer program: Canadian Internet Policy and Public Interest Clinic, The Citizen Lab, Creative Commons, Future of Music Coalition, Progress and Freedom Foundation, and Technology Policy Institute.

Check out more details (http://www.google.com/policyfellowship/faq.html) and the application (https://services.google.com/inquiry/policyfellowship), which is due by Friday, December 12, 2008.
PEOPLE NOTES

Send announcements of new personnel, changes, achievements, and retirements in your library to the HH editor, Robert Upton, at robert.upton@state.nm.us

Beth Crist has been named as the new director of the Development Services Bureau at the New Mexico State Library. She has been the acting director of the Bureau since March 2008 and has been the Outreach and Community Services Coordinator since August 2007. She came to New Mexico from the State Library of North Carolina where she was the e-learning consultant. She has also worked at the North Carolina Museum of History in Raleigh. She received her MLS from North Carolina Central University in Durham.

JOBS

Send job announcements to the HH editor, Robert Upton, at robert.upton@state.nm.us. There is no charge for this service to the library community.

Library director. The City of Clovis is accepting applications for the position of Library Director for the Clovis Carver Public Library. Salary range $33,176 to $47,174.40 DOQ. The City of Clovis offers excellent benefit and retirement programs. The Director is responsible for the overall operation of the Clovis-Carver Library including the responsibility for planning, organizing, staffing, and maintenance. Candidates should be versed in all facets of current technology and possess supervisory, communication, organizational, interpersonal, decision-making, and public relations skills that have been demonstrated in a library setting. Requires a Master’s degree in Library Science plus one year of experience as a professional level librarian in a public library with at least two years of supervisory experience. Work experience with Galaxy Circulation system is required. To be considered for this position, please submit a statement of interest and résumé to City of Clovis, Human Resources Dept., 321 Connelly Street, Clovis, New Mexico 88101. Phone (575) 763-9652. All applicants must submit an application to be considered for this position; this can be done on the city web site www.cityofclovis.org. An Equal Opportunity Employer/Smoke & Drug Fee Workplace

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