

Our hidden AGENDA

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Publications and Promotions

As the official mouthpiece of the Library Service of the Western Cape Provincial Library Service, the **Cape Librarian (CL)** not only keeps the staff of public libraries informed of the latest developments and current issues in the library field, but it also provides practical training and guidance.

The content of the magazine is carefully planned and articles selected with the information needs of librarians in mind. The editorial staff go to great lengths to commission experts in their fields identified for coverage in the **CL**. Information gained from questionnaires and suggestions from regional librarians are considered in the planning phase of the **CL** of each year. This procedure ensures that the editorial team stay in touch with the latest trends in the library and information sector, the needs of librarians, their problems and the profile of users they serve.

The magazine essentially comprises a news section, main articles and columns. Each section serves a purpose and to utilise the magazine to its fullest potential librarians should be aware of the valuable information contained in the **CL**.

Main articles

The main articles follow after the news section and often address key issues in the library and information fields. These articles provide information for professional growth and development to keep abreast with the latest trends in the library world. The content of main articles is challenging and is aimed at librarians determined not to fall into the rut of routine library work, but who want to expand their horizons and are aware of the role they can play in their sector of the library and information industry.

Columns

Bookworld

The Bookworld section features information on books and authors. Over the years

librarians have been consistent in their request for information about authors and therefore the editorial staff spare no effort to find and research information about authors librarians have expressed an interest in. *Author discussions* also often serve as background information to the discussion of a book by the same author.

A *reading circle book discussion* highlights a specific title and analyses the theme, motive of main characters, the plot and other aspects related to the narrative. These discussions are contributions from reading circles that could be used for comparison, discussion or background material.

The *genre* article is produced by the book selectors of the Library Service and on occasion by public librarians and informs and advises librarians about a specific type of reading matter, for example, historical crime fiction, first novels, travel books. The writer of the article will briefly discuss the genre and suggest useful titles. Librarians are thus kept up to date with the latest reading trends and the latest and most relevant material available in Library Service stock.

The Bookworld section concludes with a *booklist* on a subject. This is another time saving device for librarians! Make a copy of this list and display it in your library. To ensure a continued interest in the booklist, replace regularly.

Book reviews

The choice of books reviewed in the **CL** is left to the capable team of the Library Service's book selectors. Reviews highlight a new title in a popular field or by a popular author, or draw attention to a title that updates information in a field of interest or a title which contains information on a topic on which not much is available. These reviews could be copied for the information of your readers. Remember, if any of these titles are not available in your library collection, they are only an interlibrary loan away!

Accessions

This column features a list of the latest accessions of books, videos and CDs. New

additions to the stock of the Library Service are listed to inform librarians about new titles. Librarians with a special interest in stock building and who are on the lookout for specific titles will really enjoy this column. Committed librarians want to know what they can expect from the regional office in the future. Who wants to search for new titles on PALS blinking at you from the screen of your PC when you can sit and relax with a hard copy in your hand!

Documentary focus

This column promotes the use of the Video Collection of the Library Service. Different themes are selected to highlight the video titles available within that subject field. Librarians should copy these articles and have them readily available in a file for patrons to browse through and make a selection. These titles could also be used in a display with books on the same topic from the book stock.

Practical

This column is aimed at librarians wanting to improve existing procedures or novices in need of guidance and training. All librarians are pressed for time and with current staff complements being inadequate these articles are a mine of information, often written by experienced librarians sharing their expertise.

Internet

The Internet is becoming an invaluable tool for librarians, but searches are often time-consuming. Therefore this column aims to empower librarians in their searches on the Internet by either suggesting search methods and shortcuts or providing information on useful web sites.

The arts

Libraries have close links with cultural institutions such as galleries, museums, opera houses, theatres, et cetera. This column aims to keep librarians informed about developments in the art world and focuses alternately on art, music and videos/film. This column also showcases Library Service

stock related to the arts by highlighting specific titles in different mediums such as videos, films and compact discs.

Libraries

Initially this column was introduced to showcase new library facilities of public libraries affiliated to the Library Service. Severe budget cuts and the reduction of the size of the province served by the Service since 1994 resulted in fewer libraries being completed. As it is not possible to feature new libraries in every issue, two issues a year feature new library facilities in the format of a photo article.

Other libraries are featured in the remaining issues as public librarians realise their limitations regarding provision of information and they should therefore be informed about other options to refer patrons to if they cannot supply in a specific need. This column features libraries and collections such as the American Embassy Libraries, the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, Smuts House Museum and other interesting local collections.

Interesting and sometimes unusual libraries from abroad are also featured on an ad hoc basis. This column enables libraries to assess their own service and compare their service delivery to establish whether they are on track and efficient. Photographs in these articles can be used as reference in planning library layout, practical arrangement of furniture as well as signage and displays.

Displays

This column offers practical advice on the design, creating and setting up

of displays in public libraries. Many librarians claim that they are not creative and time constraints prevent them from producing displays. In this column ideas and suggestions to motivate even a colour-blind librarian are complemented by easy templates that can be enlarged or reduced on a photocopier. Many of the displays or display templates can be adapted for use by children in a holiday activity.

Regular features

During the course of the year regular features are published at certain times of the year. The compilation of the *National Days* calendar requires hours of research, but is a very important aid to librarians planning activities and displays in libraries.

Library Week is the most important promotional campaign on the library events calendar. A report back article highlights the innovative and creative work done by librarians during Library Week. This article serves as reference for other librarians in planning for the next year as interesting ideas and projects are featured in a photo article. In the November/December issue the *Library Week* campaign of the next year is introduced with a preview of the promotional material libraries will receive. This enables librarians to start planning months in advance and leaves them with enough time to organise their *Library Week* projects.

An interesting article that could also lend itself to a display, is the annual *literary awards*. The list could be photocopied and displayed in your library, be distributed to reading

circles and even one title or author could be the topic of a display if displayed with press cuttings and other information in the media.

Librarians often phone the editorial team with an enquiry about a certain topic addressed in the **CL** or a contribution by a specific author. Bear in mind that the November/December issue of each year contains the *index* of all the information published in that year, as well as a *book review index* of all the book reviews published during that year. The indexes are reference tools that provide immediate access to information published in the **CL**.

News

The news column keeps librarians up to date with latest trends and can also serve as a showcase of the work they do in their libraries. Librarians and libraries featured here should forward a copy of the **CL** to their supervisors and local authority to inform them of the sterling work done in their public library!

The news section of the **CL** carries news of staff appointments, activities at libraries, the latest information on authors and awards, as well as general information in the library and information world. New publications produced by the Promotions Department are featured to alert librarians of their arrival via their regional librarians. Announcements about important events are also published in the news section.

There is certainly more to the **CL** than meets the eye. May this issue and those to come reveal its hidden agendas to enable you to be the best librarian you can be in the interest of the promotion of reading and the use of libraries.

