
Programming for Children and Young Adults: The State Library's Role

Diana Young

Recognizing the need for public libraries to have access to knowledgeable youth services specialists, the State Library has, since 1968, provided state level children's and young adult services consultants. In 1984 the positions were combined to provide one youth services specialist. Primary programming responsibilities for this consultant are consultation, continuing education for public library youth services personnel through workshops and publications, and state-wide youth services programs.

In 1980 an interdisciplinary Children's Library Services Advisory Council was formed. That council conducted its first survey and established the following mission statement: *To participate in cooperative planning with public libraries and other related agencies in meeting the needs of North Carolina's children.*

In the years that followed, the council has changed to a public library committee. In 1984, a Youth Library Services Advisory Committee consists of representatives of small, medium, large, and regional libraries and the current chairs of the NCLA Children's Services Section and the Young Adult Committee of the Public Library Section. Each December the committee, through the Youth Services Consultant, surveys public libraries to determine the needs of local youth librarians and evaluate the total State Library youth services program, including programming. In January or February a planning meeting is held to gather additional input from youth librarians. The committee considers all the data, written and verbal, and makes recommendations on long-range planning and the coming year's program.

Through a variety of Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) Title I grants, the State Library has assisted local libraries with services to children and young adults. Of direct benefit to North Carolina's children were LSCA special projects which provided staff and materials to carry on children's programs. From 1973 through 1980, fifty-five special projects, eligible for three years of funding were awarded by the State Library. Of

these, twenty-seven or 49 per cent were for children's services, particularly outreach and serving the disadvantaged. While not all of the programs were retained in their original form by the host library, many began services (especially programming and the hiring of outreach staff) that provided children's services in areas where no previous services existed. While no special project grants are currently being awarded, without the demonstration projects of the last decade many currently existing children's programs would not have been possible.

Continuing Education

In addition to workshops sponsored by the State Library and through LSCA Title III funds, workshops such as the Rollins Colloquium are offered biennially by North Carolina Central University. These are funded or partially funded and cosponsored by the State Library. In 1983, the State Library offered LSCA funds to North Carolina library schools and library associations to encourage and enhance local continuing education.

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Through individual continuing education grants to public library employees, children's librarians can attend out-of-state programming and skills-enhancement workshops such as the American Library Association, Southeastern Library Association, National Association for the Advancement of Storytelling, and the Puppeteers of America annual conferences as well as specialized or one-time-only conferences such as the 1983 Everychild Conference and a variety of middle management workshops. Workshops are announced in the *CE Opportunities Calendar*,

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Flash, and *Tar Heel Libraries*, with programs of specific interest to children's services personnel listed in the annual Children's Librarians Calendar and in "Of Professional Interest."

Another form of State Library assisted programming is the loose-leaf service. Ideas contributed by librarians are published and distributed monthly to public libraries as part of the regular loose-leaf service. Two pages—"Preschool Programs" and "Helpful Tips" (school age)—are completely devoted to recommended local programming. Other pages such as "Promoting Children's Services," "Clip Art," and "Patterns and Scripts" often carry programming suggestions. Examples are June 1983, "Promoting Children's Services," library programming for toddlers (Henderson County Public Library); September 1983, "Patterns and Scripts," which includes a turnaround story and information on how to do one (Cumberland County Public Library); and December 1983, "Clip Art," which shares child-appealing Easter art useful in designing a brochure.

Statewide Programs

Current State Library sponsored statewide programs which directly benefit North Carolina's children and young adults include the summer

reading program, the Quiz Bowl program, and the Children's Book Week program. Each program is planned by a committee of local librarians working with the State Library and funded through LSCA Title I.

Summer Reading Program. The statewide summer reading program began in 1979. In 1980, the program received a Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation Grant for \$10,000 which made possible, for the first time, the printing of coordinated materials. LSCA began funding the program in 1981. The summer reading program makes it possible for all North Carolina public libraries to offer children a coordinated summer reading program. Each year since 1980, more than one hundred thousand children have participated in the program. Most reporting local libraries which took part in the program showed circulation increases, some as high as high as 52 per cent.¹

The program is created by a Summer Reading Program Committee, composed of local children's librarians, a school librarian, representatives from the Department of Public Instruction Reading and Education Media Programs, and coordinated by the State Library Youth Services Consultant. The committee meets four times during the year to plan and produce a statewide program flexible enough to be adapted to local



Deneen Graham, Miss North Carolina 1984, helps kick off the State Library's 1984 summer reading program by sharing a record with a young friend.



Curious George and certificates signed by North Carolina Governor Jim Hunt have been part of past summer reading programs sponsored by the State Library.

library needs, to produce support materials such as posters, certificates, reading record, bookmarks, stamps, silk screens, and activity sheets and to present a workshop based on their manual. Public libraries are encouraged to work with school libraries open during the summer months and to work with all school librarians in planning and promoting their program. The 1982 program, "Just Open A Book," won the American Library Association's John Cotton Dana Award. The publicity chairperson was Karen Perry (then at High-Point Public Library); art work was created by Ron Jones (Wake County Public Library).

Quiz Bowl. "The Quiz Bowl, aimed at high school students, was begun in 1978 as an academic competition involving high schools in 12 eastern North Carolina counties. In Quiz Bowl, local high schools both public and private, compete for local, regional, and state championships. Local and district bowls are run by local public library systems under the guidance of the State Library. Finals are administered by the State Quiz Bowl Committee which is made up of public librarians.

"Each year the State Committee meets numerous times to make rule changes, put together

statewide publicity, conduct workshops, and plan for the state finals. This committee not only formulates policy but serves as a resource to all local Quiz Bowl coordinators.

"Quiz Bowl gives the local library system a chance to interact with the community's students and teachers; cooperation between the public library and schools is fostered."²

Children's Book Week. The Children's Book Week program began in 1975 and fluctuated in design from the production and distribution of statewide certificates to the creation of a manual, camera-ready copy of materials which could be locally duplicated, and the production of a fall workshop. In 1984, the program will be changed to a special events program which includes a manual and workshop to assist local children's librarians in planning for Children's Book Week, National Library Week, Black History Month, and among other items specialized preparations for microcomputers and young adult programs.

How does the State Library fit into the children's and young adult library services programming picture? It assists local libraries by providing

- Opportunities for continuing education
- Consultant services
- Funding for statewide programs
- And a listening ear to needs and trends

References

1. "1983 Adventures A-Z, Summer Reading Program Evaluation" (Raleigh: Division of State Library, 1983).
2. "Quiz Bowl Fact Sheet" (Raleigh: Division of State Library, 1983).

Honorary and Life Membership in NCLA

The 1984-1985 Honorary and Life Membership Committee requests your recommendations for persons you consider worthy to be honorary or life members in NCLA. Suggestions should be accompanied by a biographical sketch, including contributions to libraries or librarianship. These suggestions should be sent to the committee chairperson by January 31, 1985.

The NCLA by-laws provide for the Honorary and Life Membership Committee to seek suggestions from all members and to recommend names

for these honors to the Executive Board at the Spring Workshop prior to the conference.

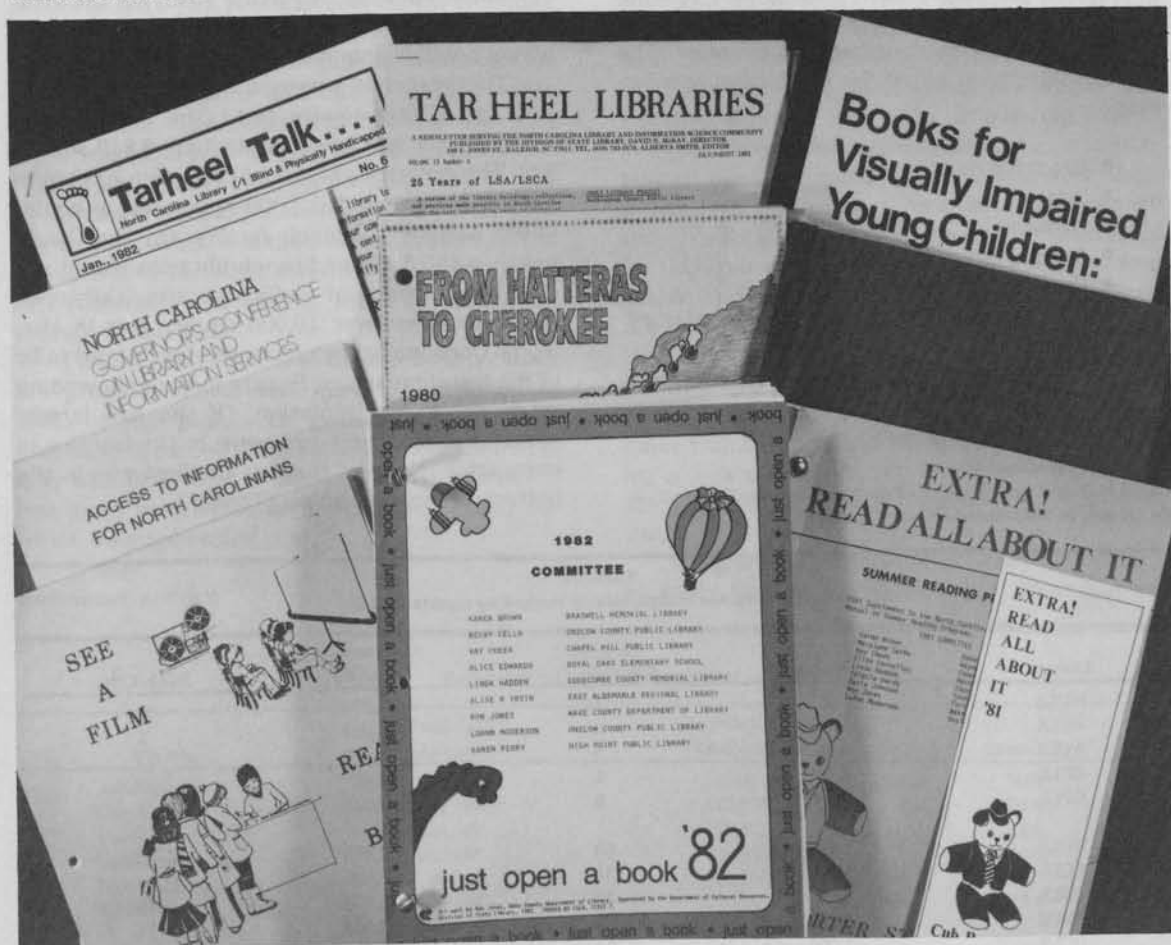
Criteria for selection are as follows:

1. Honorary memberships may be given to non-librarians in the state who have rendered important services to the library interests of North Carolina. Honorary memberships should be given at a time considered appropriate in relation to the contribution made.

2. Life memberships may be given to librarians who have served as members of the North Carolina Library Association and who have made noteworthy contributions to librarianship in the state. These memberships are limited to librarians who have retired.

3. Contributions of both groups should have been beyond the local level.
Please send your selections to:

Kathy Shropshire, chairperson
Honorary and Life Membership Committee
Greensboro Public Library
P O Drawer X-4
Greensboro, NC 27402



A variety of State Library publications help promote children's services throughout North Carolina.