

Reference and Adult Services User Group
September 10th, 2008
Menasha Public Library

Present:

Janice Dibble, Oshkosh
Keetra Baker, Winnefox
Nicole Hardina-Wilhelm, Neenah
Gretchen Raab, Neenah
Mark Arend, Winnefox
Lori Burgess, Fond du Lac
Marjorie Brashier, Fond du Lac
Joe Bongers, Menasha

1. There was a lengthy discussion of the electronic resources available through Winnefox. The WTEC asked that the group consider whether Grolier was receiving enough use to justify the \$15000 expense. It was noted that the Funk and Wagnall's, an encyclopedia comparable to Grolier, is available through Badgerlink. Keetra provided costs for some other databases that might be of interest to Winnefox libraries. These included HeritageQuest (\$20000), Ancestry (\$31000), Reference USA (\$39000), Novelist, and a new Ebsco Crafts and Hobbies product (\$6250). The group decided to recommend that Winnefox not renew Grolier and pursue other resources, pending a survey of member libraries by Mark.
2. Joe discussed the success he had in promoting the new automotive and small engine repair databases through a local hardware store. Lori added that Fond du Lac had some similar success promoting business resources through local organizations. The group is eager to hear from member libraries regarding other promotional successes.
3. The group was asked to pursue the possibility of adding online reader's advisory, similar to the Book-alikes program that the South Central Library System offers. Joe is going to follow-up with SCLS to learn more about how that program works.
4. Nicole discussed some of the problems that Neenah has had with Playaway durability. None of the other libraries present were aware of problems at their libraries. Mark encouraged Nicole to contact Cindy at WCTS to find out whether there were problems with the rotating collection of Playaways.
5. Mark reported that the Wisconsin Regional Library for the Blind is changing the format of its collection. Libraries will be receiving packets of information and there will be a session at WLA in November about the conversion.
6. Keetra passed along information from Joy about the tremendous increase in usage of Askaway following the addition of the widget to the catalog. Larger increases are expected now that the school year is under way.
7. Janice reported that Oshkosh would like to explore the possibility of allowing blocked patrons to still use Pharos computers. Pete explained to her that this would need to be a system-wide decision. None of the staff present at the meeting were aware of any interest in eliminating this condition on Internet use.

8. Mark provided an update on the legal assistance clinics that will be offered by Winnebago County. These clinics will initially be offered at the Oshkosh and Menasha libraries, but other sites may be added in the future. The program begins in November. There is a possibility of grant money for host libraries to improve their collections of legal resources.

9. Lori discussed some new initiatives at Fond du Lac, including a community-wide education calendar and the Money Smart program, a cooperative program to promote financial literacy among people of all ages.