



PUBLIC LIBRARIANS' RESPONSE TO HURRICANES: LESSONS, ISSUES AND STRATEGIES

An Eppes Lecture/Panel Discussion

February 20, 2009 12:30 – 2:30, Louis Shores Building Auditorium 006

Rebecca Hamilton, Assistant Secretary of the Office of the State Library/
State Librarian of Louisiana

Rebecca Mitchell, Director, Alabama Public Library Service

Judith Ring, Director, State Library and Archives of Florida

Peggy Rudd, Director and Librarian, Texas State Library and Archives Commission

MaryEllin Santiago, Manager, Southeastern Library Network's (SOLINET)
Gulf Coast Libraries Project

Sharman B. Smith, Executive Director, Mississippi Library Commission

Background

These six experts have had “hands on” experience in assisting libraries plan for and respond to hurricanes. As such they are assisting the Information Institute in completing a study that will identify public library best practices in hurricane preparedness and response, create a web portal to organize and access a broad range of information that can be of assistance to public librarians and local communities regarding hurricanes, and provide training to public libraries for how best to use this website and the various materials generated by the study. Detailed background information about the study, its goals, funding, activities, can be found at: http://www.ii.fsu.edu/news_detail.cfm?newsID=62.

Topics to be Discussed

- Lessons from recent hurricanes in Texas, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana and Florida
- Roles of public libraries in hurricane
- Rebuilding libraries and community infrastructure
- Local and state politics in hurricane preparedness and response
- Integrating public library preparedness and response with the local community
- Coordinating public library response with other emergency management services
- The role of the state library in support and assisting communities and public libraries
- Strategies for how public libraries can be better prepared to assist their community
- Audience question/answers

Directions: <http://www.ii.fsu.edu/contact.cfm>

Additional Information

The program will also be webcast with access instructions to be announced on the College of Information webpage at <http://www.ci.fsu.edu/> on February 20, 2009. Contact Dr. Charles R. McClure, Francis Eppes Professor of Information Studies, and Director of the Information Institute cmclure@lis.fsu.edu for additional information.

About the Speakers

Rebecca Hamilton (rhamilto@state.lib.la.us) is the Assistant Secretary of the Office of the State Library/State Librarian of Louisiana (<http://www.state.lib.la.us>), a position she was appointed to in 2005. She earned a bachelor's degree in Psychology and a Master's degree in Library and Information Science from Louisiana State University. In 2001, she accepted the position of CEO/Director of the St. Mary Parish Library system and in 2003 she was named Associate State Librarian at the State Library of Louisiana. In July of 2005 Rebecca was appointed State Librarian by Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu. She worked closely with Southeastern Library Network, Inc. (SOLINET) to obtain a \$12 Million grant to provide temporary library facilities after the storms in both Louisiana and Mississippi. Most recently she has been elected to the SOLINET board of directors representing State Library Agencies.

Rebecca Mitchell rebecca.mitchell@apls.alabama.gov is the Director of the Alabama Public Library Service,(APLS) <http://www.apls.state.al.us>, a position she was appointed to in January 2002. Mitchell is a native of Mississippi. She has a library degree from the University of Mississippi and an MLS from the University of Alabama. Mrs. Mitchell has more than 35 years professional experience in libraries, including academic, public, school, medical and state libraries. Under her direction of the State Library, (APLS) the state library has developed its services to include information technology circuit riders, that work directly with the 213 public libraries in the state of provide technology support for public libraries at no cost to the individual library. Alabama under her direction was the first state to offer statewide free tutoring to its students.

Judi Ring jring@dos.state.fl.us assumed the role of State Librarian of Florida <http://dlis.dos.state.fl.us/index.cfm> in January of 2003. She came to Tallahassee in 2001 as Deputy State Librarian from Fort Myers, FL. With a Masters degree in Library Science from Clarion University of PA, Judi worked for over 20 years in public libraries. Originally from Erie, PA where she worked in the Erie County Library System, Judi held progressively more responsible positions until 1995 when she became Library Director. Moving to Fort Myers in 1998, she assumed the role of Deputy Library Director at the Lee County Library System until moving to Tallahassee and becoming the State Librarian.

Peggy D. Rudd prudd@tsl.state.tx.us has served as the Director and Librarian of the Texas State Library and Archives Commission <http://www.tsl.state.tx.us> since October 1999. Prior to her return to her native state of Texas, Peggy served as the Chief of the Bureau of Library Development at the State Library of Florida from 1994 to 1999. Between 1988 and 1994, Peggy served as the Assistant Director for Planning, Evaluation, and Research in the Library Development and Networking Division of the Library of Virginia. Prior to that time, Peggy worked for five years with the Northeast Texas Library System, three years with the Central Texas Library System, and five years with the Austin Public Library. She began her library career in the Undergraduate Library at the University of Texas at Austin.

MaryEllin Santiago msantiago@solinet.net, Project Manager of the Gulf Coast Library Project managed by SOLINET funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation www.solinet.net/gulfcoast. Currently working to rebuild public libraries in the 21 communities along the MS and LA Gulf Coast impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The Gulf Coast Project has three goals: Building temporary libraries, administering planning grants, and restoring PAC's to the participant library communities. MaryEllin has 25 plus years experience working with libraries across the United States. Her career has taken her from a bookmobile librarian in rural NJ to a VP of Sales for Proquest/Voyager-each opportunity providing the varied experiences needed to meet the demands of this unique and rewarding project.

Sharman Smith sharman@mlc.lib.ms.us, Executive Director of the Mississippi Library Commission <http://www.mlc.lib.ms.us>, directed the design/construction of a new \$13 million facility; worked closely with libraries affected by Hurricane Katrina; and led development of a public library system accreditation program. Smith was State Librarian of Iowa creating a statewide library information network; directing the \$20 million restoration of the 100 year old state library building; and securing state aid for public libraries. Smith has consulted nationally and internationally on library construction, statewide library consortia and library advocacy. She has also served as director of a multi-county public library system and a municipal library.

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