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# Welcome to The Year of the Learning Commons

David v. Loertscher and Elizabeth "Betty" Marcoux

In this issue and on The Year of the Learning Commons (<http://sites.google.com/site/yearofthelearningcommons/>) website, we kick off an initiative centered on YOU! It is your chance to demonstrate the great new ideas you are creating and doing to move to the center of teaching and learning in your school. The website above contains events and ideas for you to join the celebration. Please note:

- A short YouTube video will appear each month on the website to explore the characteristics of the learning commons concept.
- A recognition initiative will appear on the website where you will be able to spotlight administrators, teachers, specialists, students, and parents who are contributing to the learning commons impact.
- The Year of the Learning Commons symbol will identify learning commons related articles in this and forthcoming issues of our magazine.
- Please let the editors know what you are doing so that we can spotlight your work in future issues - (David Loertscher: reader.david@gmail.com and Betty Marcoux: betty.marcoux@gmail.com).

In this issue of *Teacher Librarian* we have several articles dealing with activities in which you are engaged, not the least of which is the Learning Commons approach. We travel globally to provide you with information to use as you wend your way toward a more relevant, inclusive, dynamic school library facility. From architectural to personnel approaches, this issue is filled with suggestions that urge you to work on aspects of your program.

We start the issue out with a bang! School architects are not always known for their inspiration or their understanding of educational function over form. However, Pfau Long Architecture Ltd., is a leading California firm which embraces the learning commons philosophy through their planning and use of learning spaces they create. Whether you are lucky enough to be planning a new area or just renovating a space into the idea of a learning commons, don't miss this article.

Australia has long been forward thinking about the philosophy of the learning commons, and the iCentre presented by Lyn Hay is no exception. She discusses the professional collaboration and planning necessary to implement a learning commons, and how to engage students in it. Kompar looks at

how professional development will assist us in developing the learning commons model.

And then, we have perspectives about the relationship between a teacher librarian and a principal – from both sides. Interesting that so much of what is said is shared between these professionals. Leadership and understanding are the two main insights that each speak of in their short opinions about the teacher librarian.

Reading will always be a critical part of any library program, and in this reading article in *Teacher Librarian*, McElmeel talks about motivation as well as appreciation. She looks critically at the issue of Accelerated Reading programs, and asks important questions about them. Definitely worth considering as so many schools live by their reading programs. Along with this article is our Canadian humorist's take on why boys don't read as much as girls. His advice is worth considering.

Makerspaces have become an integral part of life in many places, not the least of which is the school library or learning commons. Smay and Walker invite us to consider their exciting program and its ideas as we move forward on our own plans.

Dr. Loertscher's "What Works" column is about the importance of an "elevator speech" when we consider how to best explain the concept of the Learning Commons in a succinct and meaningful way. The column also addresses several significant professional issues. Dr. Marcoux's "Brain Trust" column features Craig Seasholes, a seasoned and inspiring teacher librarian who weaves his spirit of collaboration and leadership. Ray's Advocacy column talks about how changed our field is and how we can adapt while still being advocates for our students. Lamb provides more app and website reviews and joins Johnson for another extremely useful "InforTech" col-

umn. Goldsborough addresses safe use of Wi-Fi and Killeen promotes poetry for our youngest students.

Come celebrate with us the exciting times in your learning commons; create a local celebration; invite presentations about the learning commons to your conferences and join others interested in creating great learning experiences for children and teens. Articles that are Learning Commons centric will receive, both in this issue and future ones, the emblem noted below as an indication of what you will want to be studying as you take your journey toward this concept.



## WRITE FOR **TEACHER LIBRARIAN!**

The editors of *Teacher Librarian* welcome original manuscripts on any aspect of library services for children and young adults that will contribute to excellence in programs and improved support for their delivery. We are committed to collaborative partnerships for improved student learning through thought-provoking and challenging feature articles, strategies for effective advocacy, and critical analysis of management and programming issues

We invite you to share your knowledge, expertise, or research with the *Teacher-Librarian* readership and the greater teacher librarian community. We encourage articles from both practitioners and library educators. Submissions will be considered for publication only if they have not been published previously and they are not under active consideration by another journal. Articles usually range in length from 2000 to 3500 words, but can be longer or shorter depending upon the needs of the topic.

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