

ST-1

Arizona Library Association Report, October 2004
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Phoenix Public Library Filtering Policy Changed due to City Council

The Phoenix City Council voted on September 8, 2004 to filter all public access computers in the Phoenix Public Library system. The Council took this action following the August 11th arrest of a paroled sex offender who was in possession of child pornography that he admitted downloading at the Phoenix Public Library. Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon spearheaded the Council's action, one that put the City Council in conflict with Phoenix's Library Advisory Board. Following the Council's vote, Phoenix City Librarian Toni Garvey immediately implemented the new filtering policy, one that now prevents adult patrons from choosing to disable the 8e6 Technologies software that PPL uses to block pornographic websites. Previously, adults had the option of disabling the filter.

This issue received a great deal of coverage in the local press and many public library directors in the Phoenix metropolitan area were contacted by both reporters and community residents regarding the Internet filtering policies at their libraries. The Arizona Republic newspaper featured a number of editorials on the issue, as well as letters to the editor on both sides of the topic. Eleanor Eisenberg, Executive Director of the American Civil Liberties Union of Arizona, has indicated that this change in policy could lead to legal action in the future.

EqualAccess Libraries Selected

Stephanie Gerding, Equal Access Director for the Arizona State Library, recently announced the selection of the fifteen public libraries who will participate in the Arizona EqualAccess initiative. The initiative, developed by Libraries for the Future, is being funded by a challenge grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and matching grants from the Arizona State Library, the Qwest Foundation, and the Arizona Community Foundation.

Libraries were selected through an application process coordinated by the Arizona State Library. Applicants were asked to choose two Access Program models from a selection of Health Access, Lifelong Access, and Youth Access models. The fifteen libraries selected for participation in the initiative are: Avondale Public Library, Chandler Public Library, the Colorado River Indian Tribes, Glendale Public Library, Holbrook Public Library, the Maricopa County Library, Mayer Public Library, Nogales-Santa Cruz County Public Library, Oro Valley Public Library, Parker Public Library, Phoenix Public Library, Scottsdale Public Library System, Tempe Public Library, the Tucson-Pima Public Library, and the Yuma County Library.

Next Chapter Initiative Grants Awarded by Piper Trust

The Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust announced the award of \$1.6 million in Next Chapter Initiative grants to establish four new life options programs in the Phoenix metropolitan area. Next Chapter (Life Options) programs help individuals nearing retirement answer the question,

"what's next?" by providing "directions and connections" that enable them to clarify their vision, then develop a practical plan for realizing that vision. These centers, among the first in the nation, will support the needs of Baby Boomers and will offer an array of services and programs including financial planning assistance, volunteer opportunities and civic engagement, re-careering, lifelong learning, and ways to build social connections.

Among the four recipients of the three year grants were two public libraries located within the Phoenix metro area. The Piper Trust awarded \$255,600 to the Chandler Public Library to develop a Boomer summit and an array of programs and services that will be offered at Chandler's central and branch libraries. The Tempe Community Services Department was awarded \$547, 644 to build a 2,000 square foot Connections Café and adjacent life options program space within the Tempe Public Library. The Trust also awarded grants to the Mesa and Scottsdale Community Colleges. The Virginia G. Piper Charitable Trust, founded in 1995, is one of the top 100 foundations in the country and is the largest in Arizona.

Glendale Public Library Receives Grant for Health Outreach Services.

The Glendale Public Library received a \$25,000 grant from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine to fund Operation Health Outreach, a program to improve access to health information to the Glendale's Hispanic population. The project includes the development of a collection of health books and media in Spanish, Spanish language Internet health search classes, free Spanish health information seminars, and a health fair featuring Spanish-speaking health workers. Librarian Frieda Ling will coordinate the program which will run from January to December 2005.

The Trust received over \$ 500,000,000 when Mrs. Piper's estate was settled in 2000.