

# NLLN Continuing Education Scholarship Reports for 2007/2008

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**PLA National Convention**  
**March 26 – 28, 2008**

My experience at PLA was great! We arrived on Wednesday and went to the Grand Opening Ceremony –where I learned it is OK not to pick up every single thing the vendors were giving away!

The first seminar I went to was “Reference in the Age of Google- How Do We Compete?” The guy who spoke, Joe Jaines, was very good. He said not to give up hope, we can’t compete in every way with Google, but there is one way we can strive to be better. The claim is Google is “fast, cheap and good enough”. Librarians can’t beat cheap (although are patrons think we get everything for free!), and we are certainly not as fast as Google, but we can give them a run for their money on being better than “good enough”. He said if the person walks in our door, he is committed to finding an answer within our walls- even if *we* use Google. While a person who is searching the web may happen upon our site, if his attention isn’t grabbed within 20 seconds he is gone. So the content of our character *and* our website, have to be top-notch.

I attended “Pain in the Brain- Dealing with Adolescents in the Library” that was enlightening also. I am about to have one of those adolescents in my house so I really paid attention! The speaker was a consultant who had worked in libraries doing many things, including being a reference and kid’s librarian. She had good tips and tricks on dealing with teenagers. She mentioned getting the “leader of the pack” to help out and the others will more than likely follow. Telling them they either have a choice to leave the library – or the computer lab- within 3 minutes or the cops will be called, is a good deterrent to bad behavior. It was good to know it is not *all* their fault; their brains haven’t developed enough for them to grasp how loud they are being, or that they really shouldn’t be “courting” their significant others in public.

On Thursday night I went to the Audio Publishers Dinner. I listened to Jacqueline Winspeare tell of how she thought of the Maisie Dobbs series and how she greatly admired the women of World War I. I heard the Executive Producer of Books on Tape say that he was told his epitaph should read, “I’m listening” but he decided against it because it sounded too creepy! Scott Brick told of his experiences reading authors books and how he appreciates it when they offer their input, especially on the pronunciation of things. After an hour of laughing and enjoying a meal, we got a grab- bag full of audio books- of course none of which were read by Scott Brick!

I also went to the Mystery Authors Panel- that was great! I listened to C J Box tell how he had an agent who wasn’t very good and after two years of not hearing from him, he found out that the guy had died the year before. I learned that when T Jefferson Parker was six months old his first heroine of books was found in trashy romance novels. And that Karen Rose had an engineering degree and was hesitant to break into the fiction world. Getting their books and their autographs was a highlight of the week.

I met with lots of vendors and got many wonderful gifts. I think I walked away with 24 paperbacks, 6 hard covers, 5 DVDs and 11 audio books! Many are already sitting on the shelf waiting to be catalogued. I saw old friends who I have dealt with here at the library for many years- we had a good time catching up. I saw people who I have met at MLA, it is strange to think I only see them once every year or so, but I still know who they are!

All in all, a wonderful time! Thanks so much for giving me the opportunity to go.

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4/17/2008