

hi i cant find the books i want but it shows nothing

May, 2013



Photo of Thea Evenstad, Emily Papagni, Caleb Tucker-Raymond

Answerland, Oregon's Statewide Virtual Reference Service (<http://www.answerland.org/>), recognizes volunteer Thea Evenstad for her excellent virtual reference work while staffing the service in April 2013.

In this transcript, the patron was looking for some books and also had questions about fines and an item never checked out. Right away, Thea offered to have someone from the patron's home library follow up about the fines. Through asking clarifying questions, Thea determined that the question about the item never checked out also related to fines, so this information went into the follow-up as well. Thea then identified the books the patron was looking for and sent catalog links to them for the patron to verify that the titles were correct. She determined that the patron's library did not have the books and mentioned that the patron could obtain them via Interlibrary Loan. Thea then walked the patron through making an Interlibrary Loan request for one of the titles; she did an outstanding job of making sure that the patron was with her every step of the way. At the end of this instruction, Thea reiterated the steps to make an Interlibrary Loan request and restated that someone from the patron's home library would be in touch soon to follow up about the fines question. She made a final offer for any more help, to verify that all of the patron's needs had been met.

The Quality Team is impressed with Thea's work with this patron, from start to finish. She asked clarifying questions throughout the interaction; she had a welcoming tone; she asked follow-up questions to make sure that the patron was with her and that the patron's needs were met. Not only did she personally offer more help, but she also ensured that the interaction would go into follow-up so the patron's fines question could be answered. Thea also demonstrated excellent virtual reference service when she taught the patron how to make a successful Interlibrary Loan request and empowered the patron to make any further desired requests.

As an expression of our appreciation, Thea was presented with flowers and a certificate at the Oregon Virtual Reference Summit. Please join us in congratulating her!

The Answerland Quality Team

Stephanie Debner, Mt. Hood Community College Library
Barbara O'Neill, Washington County Cooperative Library Services
Emily Papagni, Multnomah County Library

Hi, I am very frustrated by this research question. I am trying to find how many green jobs (this can be renewable energy jobs as well) are in each State in the U.S. from 2002 until present. I have been checking Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Census...

May, 2013

Photo of Emily Papagni with Alison Kastner



Answerland, Oregon's Statewide Virtual Reference Service (<http://www.answerland.org/>), recognizes Alison Kastner at Multnomah County Library for her excellent virtual reference work while staffing the service in October 2012.

In this transcript, the patron was looking for information about the number of green or renewable energy jobs there were in each state in the U.S. from 2002 forward. Throughout the chat, Alison asked clarifying questions

to ensure that the resources found would meet the patron's information need. She referred the patron to three library databases and some reliable websites and provided examples of what kind of information the patron might find there. Alison mentioned more than once that she would send the chat through to follow-up, so that other librarians could give the patron more information; upon finding out that the patron was downtown on a regular basis, she also referred the patron to Central Library's Science and Business room for more help.

Alison used a very friendly and personable tone. In the course of the conversation, it came to light that the patron knew Alison in real life: the patron was a parent who brought her daughter to the Hollywood Library when Alison was a children's librarian there, and credited Alison with turning her daughter into a voracious reader. Alison said that this made her day!

The Quality Team is impressed with Alison's persistence with this challenging question and her commitment – through the numerous mentions of follow-up options – to getting the patron to the information she needed. This transcript is an outstanding example of the personal touch that can be challenging in a text-only medium: Alison communicated warmth, helpfulness, humor, and a sense of the person behind the text which turned a transaction into a conversation.

As an expression of our appreciation, Alison was presented with flowers and a certificate at the Oregon Virtual Reference Summit. Please join us in congratulating her!

The Answerland Quality Team

Stephanie Debner, Mt. Hood Community College Library
Barbara O'Neill, Washington County Cooperative Library Services
Emily Papagni, Multnomah County Library

I am looking for a case number

June, 2013



Caleb Tucker-Raymond, Sue Ludington, Barbara O'Neill, Stephanie Debner, Emily Papagni

Answerland, Oregon's Statewide Virtual Reference Service (<http://www.answerland.org/>), recognizes Sue Ludington at Washington County Law Library for her excellent virtual reference work while staffing Answerland in March 2013.

In this transcript Sue answers an email question from a student who is researching a wrongful death suit for a term paper assignment.

Sue provides information from PACER (www.pacer.gov), the federal government's public access service to court documents. She found the case number, date, and the outcome (the case was ultimately dismissed) and sent the full judgment to the student. The student sent a reply asking if there was a way to access all the court documents of the case. The student also asked if there were any subsequent lawsuits.

Sue replied with information on how to access the documents for free and an explanation of how to download documents. She also gave an explanation of how to search PACER for any lawsuits that might still be pending. In addition, OJIN (Oregon Judicial Information Network) might have additional information and Sue provided information on how to search that resource.

Sue encouraged the student to reply if additional help was needed and even gave her phone number in case the student wanted to speak with her.

The student did reply with one last email saying: “You have been a huge help. Thank God for people like you willing to go that extra mile for students like me! Thanks so much once again. I really appreciate you.”

The Quality Team appreciates Sue too! We’re impressed with Sue’s friendly tone, her knowledge of legal resources and her teaching skills.

We’re grateful to all the law librarians who answer questions for Answerland, providing information that most Oregon libraries cannot easily access.

As an expression of our appreciation, Sue was presented with flowers and a certificate. Please join us in congratulating her!

The L-net Quality Team
Stephanie Debner, Mt. Hood Community College Library
Barbara O’Neill, Washington County Cooperative Library Services
Emily Papagni, Multnomah County Library

I am doing a career research project on photography. Can I have help finding some books and websites please?

July, 2013



Photo of Hillary Ostlund by Sigrid Sharif

Answerland, Oregon's Statewide Virtual Reference service (<http://www.answerland.org/>), recognizes Hillary Ostlund at Hillsboro Public Library for her excellent virtual reference work while staffing the service in April 2013.

In this transcript, the patron was looking for resources for a research project on photography careers. Hillary sent the patron links to authoritative websites for the patron's topic and targeted catalog searches from the patron's home library system; she gave brief, but effective, instructions to the patron on how to place holds on books from the patron's library catalog. Hillary also directed the patron to a database that would have good job information, as well as Photoshop tutorials. When she asked if the patron had enough to get started on the project, the patron asked for help in locating colleges that offered photography programs, since part of the assignment was to contact a college for information. Hillary sent some website links for photography program information and recommended checking college directories at the library, mentioning that a librarian would be able to help the patron find and use these types of books. Hillary also helped the patron to understand how to find a college's contact information, so the patron could write the college for the information needed for the project.

The Quality Team is impressed with Hillary's excellent service throughout this interaction. She asked reference interview questions throughout to ensure that she was getting the patron the needed information. As soon as she had sent several links to the patron, she asked for the patron's email address so the patron would get a copy of the transcript with all the links; at the end of the chat, she reiterated that she would add the email address to the chat, so the patron would get the transcript. Throughout the chat, Hillary had a very positive attitude with the patron and offered options and advice at every step of the interaction. Her ending to the chat exemplifies her attitude to the patron: "I'm so happy you came to the library chat service for help... Good luck with your research!" She ended the chat by extending an invitation to the patron to come back anytime.

As an expression of our appreciation, Hillary was presented with flowers and a certificate. Please join us in congratulating her!

The L-net Quality Team
Stephanie Debner, Mt. Hood Community College Library
Barbara O'Neill, Washington County Cooperative Library Services
Emily Papagni, Multnomah County Library

do the local libraries keep local newspapers on file so if I was looking for a family obituary that was 10 years old I can find it in my local library



August, 2013

Photo of Laura Baca

Answerland, Oregon's Statewide Virtual Reference service (<http://www.answerland.org/>), recognizes Laura Baca at Cedar Mill Community Library for her excellent virtual reference work while staffing the service in March 2013.

In this transcript, an out-of-state patron was looking for a local newspaper that might have an obituary for a family member who had died more than 10 years prior. The patron did not know where it was published, but knew the name of the deceased, the date of death, and the date the obituary ran. The patron also offered that the purpose of finding the obituary was to confirm birth siblings, as the patron was adopted. Laura asked if the patron had time to wait while she searched; within a few minutes, she had located the full obituary and pasted the text into the chat. This information was a genealogical discovery for the patron: three half-siblings and lots of nieces and nephews. The patron responded: "This is wonderful information, thank you so much... You have made my upcoming holiday."

Lynne Erlandson, Head of Adult Services at Cedar Mill Community Library, brought this transcript to the Quality Team's attention, partly because Laura received a follow-up card from the patron. On the outside, the card said: "You make my world a better place." On the inside, the patron said that this information had led her to connecting with her biological mother and ended her message by saying: "I am very thankful for your kindness and willingness to assist me. This new journey will be exciting and very unique, not many people get this opportunity. Your random act of kindness has impacted my life in such a positive way, I cannot thank you enough!"

The Quality Team is impressed with Laura's excellent use of reference interview questions in this chat, which helped her move from the initial inquiry ("Do the local libraries keep local newspapers on file so if I was looking for a family obituary that was 10 years old I can find it in my local library?") to providing the full text of the specific obituary within a matter of minutes. When the patron offered some personal information, including the plans to use this new information, Laura responded warmly, but professionally, bringing the chat to a close with wishes for a good holiday and thanking the patron for the question.

As an expression of our appreciation, Laura was presented with flowers and a certificate. Please join us in congratulating her!

The Answerland Quality Team
Stephanie Debner, Mt. Hood Community College Library
Barbara O'Neill, Washington County Cooperative Library Services
Emily Papagni, Multnomah County Library