

# Elk Evasion Award - There is an elk in my living room, what am I to do?

April, 2015



Dawn Lowe-Wincentsen

Answerland, Oregon's Statewide Virtual Reference service (<http://www.answerland.org>), recognizes Dawn Lowe-Wincentsen for her excellent virtual reference work while staffing the service in January 2014. Her work inspired the Quality Team to award her the first Elk Evasion Award, in recognition of her stellar grace (and humor) under pressure.

The six-minute chat started with the question, “There is an elk in my living room, what am I to do?” Dawn rolled with the punches, playing along with the patron and parrying his verbal quips. After several exchanges, and the patron professing his love, Dawn adeptly turned to a professional inquiry, “Is there anything besides elk evasion I may help with?” At this point, the patron disconnected from the chat.

Dawn clearly met the patron where he was at, and she showed humor and a clear engagement with the patron. At a fitting moment in the conversation, she offered additional assistance, opening up the door for the patron to have any information needs met. While the transcript could be read as a joke or prank, the Quality Team feels that the way Dawn handled it would encourage the patron to come back to Answerland for (real) information needs.

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

The Answerland Quality Team

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## **I was wondering where I could find out information from authoritative sources, databases to work in...**

May, 2015



Kathryn Kohl

Answerland, Oregon's Statewide Virtual Reference Service (<http://www.answerland.org/>), recognizes volunteer Kathryn Kohl for her excellent virtual reference work while staffing the service in February 2015.

In this chat, the patron asks for help in learning how to find authoritative sources. Kathryn greets the patron and asks some clarifying questions, ascertaining that the patron has access to college library databases for writing a paper. In a straightforward, cheerfully helpful manner, Kathryn explains how to find and limit her results in the college library databases to health resources and to scholarly, peer reviewed articles, and how to find government or educational websites using Google's advanced search limiters. Kathryn encourages the patron to follow up with the college librarians at her school to get an in-depth tour of what is available to her as a college student, reassuring her that her librarians would be happy to help. The patron says in her exit survey, "Kathryn, was very friendly and helpful, as I am a first time user I needed all the help I could get!"

The Answerland Quality Team is impressed with Kathryn's reference interview, and her very encouraging manner with a student new to library electronic resources. As an expression of our appreciation, Kathryn was presented with flowers and a certificate. Please join us in congratulating her!

The Answerland Quality Team

Stephanie Debner, Mt. Hood Community College Library  
Joanna Milner, Multnomah County Library  
Emily Papagni, Multnomah County Library  
Ann-Marie Anderson, Tigard Public Library

# **I am pregnant.. and I don't know who to talk to. Or what to search for a good baby health.**

June, 2015



Emily-Jane Dawson

Answerland, Oregon's Statewide Virtual Reference Service (<http://www.answerland.org/>), recognizes Emily-Jane Dawson at Multnomah County Library for her excellent virtual reference work while staffing the service in March 2015.

In the transcript, the patron was looking for help in finding someone to talk to about her pregnancy and with locating information about maintaining her health during the pregnancy. Emily-Jane's tone throughout was welcoming, with a touch of humor that seemed to put the patron at ease. Emily-Jane followed the Answerland rubric throughout the reference interaction. When she asked clarifying questions, she learned that the patron first wanted to find information about blood pressure and pregnancy. Emily-Jane referred the patron to MedlinePlus and provided her with a link to results and search terms to use. The patron replied, "Wow. This was a really good place to start!!" The patron then asked for advice in telling her parents about her pregnancy and indicated she was sixteen years old. Emily-Jane used a warm and sympathetic tone and provided helpful guidance about possible sources for help in the patron's community. She followed up on the additional age information the patron provided and provided her with online reference sources aimed at teens.

The Answerland Quality Team is impressed with Emily-Jane's reference interview and her exceptionally sympathetic, approachable and helpful demeanor through the transaction. This notable award is also noteworthy because it will be the first time that a librarian has received the award twice, which speaks to what an extraordinary librarian Emily-Jane is. Emily-Jane first won a notable transcript award in 2007.

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

The Answerland Quality Team

Stephanie Debner, Mt. Hood Community College Library  
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Emily Papagni, Multnomah County Library  
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