



The Next Generation:
Engaging Young Professionals at the
Boston Public Library Foundation
and Boston Public Library

Melanie Damsker
and Ken Peterson

February 19, 2007



Lets start from the very beginning ...

- The mission of the library
 - The mission of the Boston Public Library is to preserve and provide access to the historical record of our society and to serve the cultural, educational and informational needs of the people of the City and the Commonwealth.
- The mission of the foundation of the library
 - The Boston Public Library Foundation's mission is to enhance the public visibility and to raise public and private funds in support of the revitalization of the Boston Public Library.

Wait... I thought this presentation is about Young Professionals

Who are they?

What do they do for the library?

What do they contribute?

What does the Library do for them?

Are they right for your library?

Who are they?

- Emerging community leaders in a variety of fields
 - Business executives
 - Parents
 - Teachers
 - New college graduates
 - Graduate students

What do they all have in common?

They all want to support and learn about the Library!

They are the future of the Library!

What do they do?

- Raise money and awareness for...
 - Branch Programs
 - Technology
 - Special Collections
 - Ongoing Historic Restoration Projects
- Create a buzz around library programs and events
- Have fun!!!

What do they contribute?

- Time
- Energy
- Networks
- Funds

What does the Library do for them?

- Big events
 - Paint the Town Read
- Event series
- Programs for young adults
- Networking opportunities

Through the eyes of a YP member...

- Diane Yarrow – Co-Chair of Young Professional Event Series and Co-Chair of 2006 Paint the Town Read

Are there any challenges with a YP group?

- Think big picture
- More money will come later, but can your library afford it now?
- Manage their expectations

Are they right for your Library?

- Do you have a vibrant young community near your library?
- Do you have a need to get your message out to a young professional audience?
- Do you have at least one staff person who is ready and willing to recruit and steward young professionals?

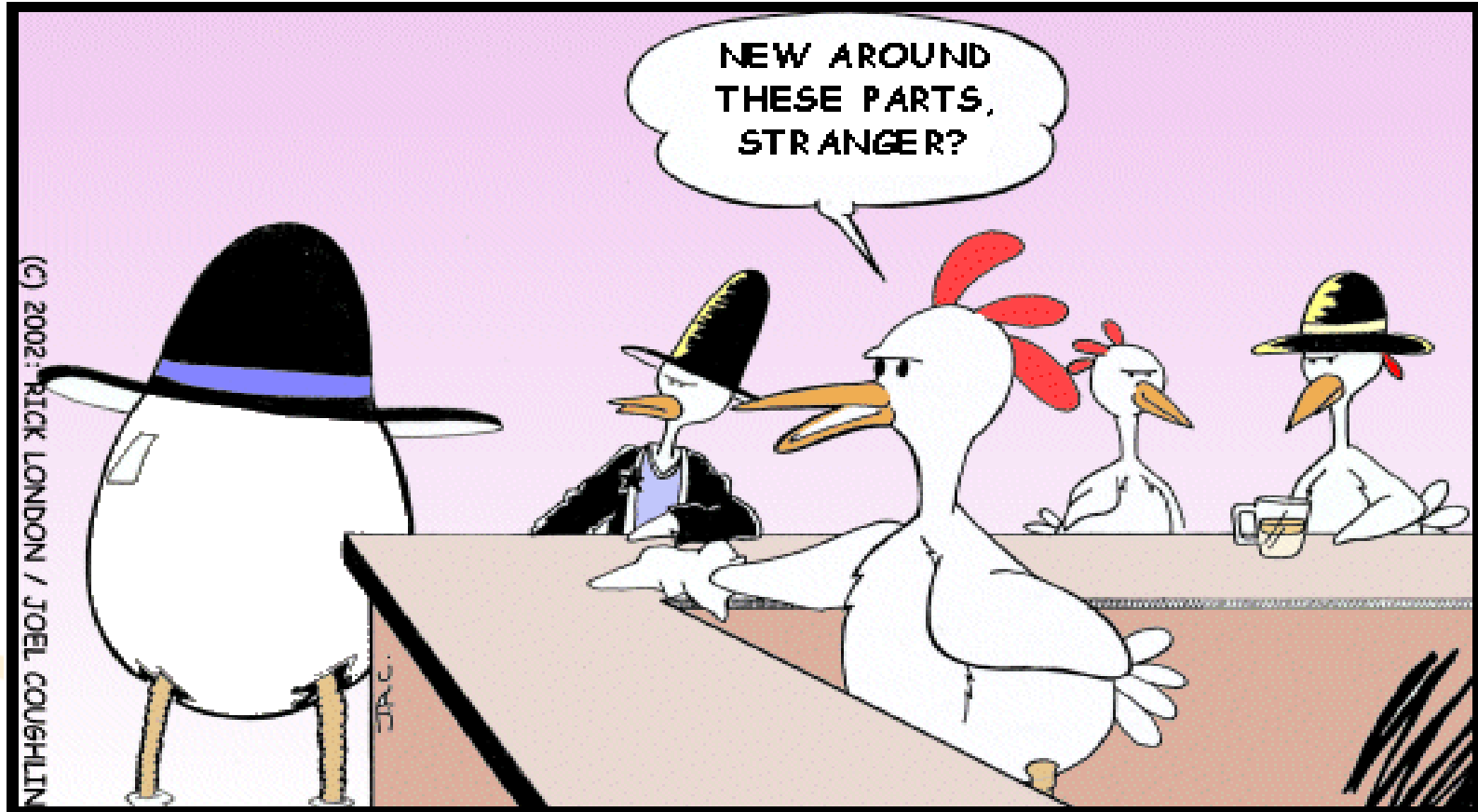
Now ... how do you get them?

- Look to your Board of Directors/trustees
- Find key stakeholders in the Library who can tap into Young Professionals
- Have a fun and educational event to attract them

How do we grow them?

- Challenges
 - Growing them to the next level
 - Staying ahead with new initiatives
 - No Guarantees
- Create opportunities
 - Give incentives for being involved
 - Honor the leaders
 - Form committees
 - Events
 - Service
 - Focus on new library programs ... like HAP!

What Comes First the Chicken or the Egg?



AND YET THE QUESTION REMAINED:
"WHO CAME FIRST?"

The Eggs:

- Homework Assistance Program (HAP)
- Read Your Way to Fenway



Homework Assistance Program

- YP Support brings-
 - Teen-centered after school activities
 - Develops a forum to exchange ideas and collaborate
 - Offers an opportunity for students an activity to declare on their college applications
 - Introduces immigrant families to a free resources and ultimately other services available at the library
 - Mentors meet successful YP's whom offer career and college advice from a non-school perspective
 - By training mentors in library resources, they become library ambassadors in their community

Homework Assistance Program

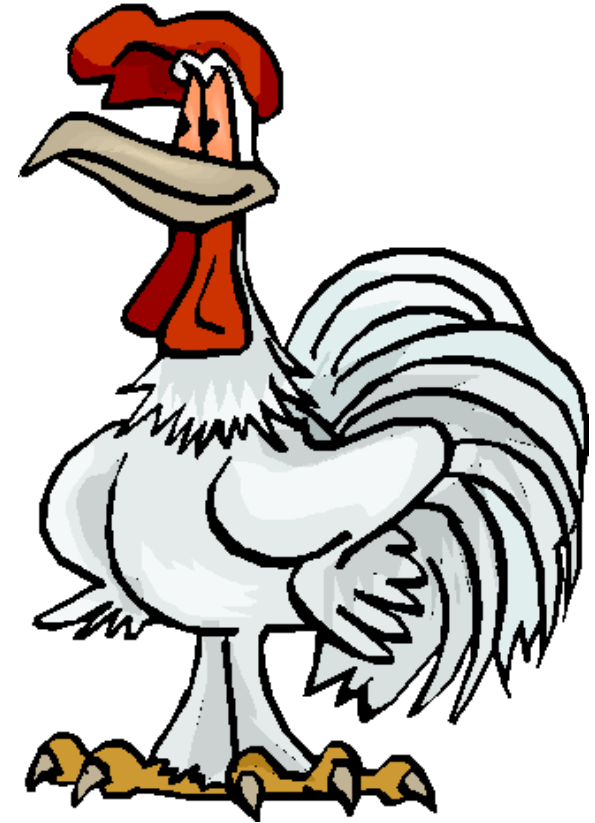
- Funding Priorities:
 - Increase mentor stipends
 - HAP Scholarships for high performing mentors
 - Implement off-site mentor trainings
- Budget:
 - 3 Teaching fellows – \$42,000
 - Mentor Stipends (90 Mentors 2006)– \$128,000
 - Printing/Equipment – \$5,625
 - Kick off Event – \$1,000
- **Total= \$221,625**

Read Your Way to Fenway

- Great summer reading program with 100% of the volunteers coming from the YP group
- 1600 Tickets distributed to attend the event
- By allowing them to volunteer, the positive experience returns to the company where peers might be motivated to engage in similar activities

The Chicken:

- Leventhal Map Center
- John Adams Digital Library
- SchoolRooms



Norman B. Leventhal Map Center

- The Norman B. Leventhal Map Center at the Boston Public Library is a public private partnership launched in 2004 to preserve and provide free public access to the Boston Public Library's historically significant collection of 200,000 maps and 5,000 atlases.
- Recently launched a new website to highlight educational lessons with maps and digitized unique BPL/Leventhal holdings

John Adams Digital Library

- Grant Funded Project:
 - Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)
 - General Services Administration (GSA)
 - Lowell Foundation
- Goals for Project:
 - Full **electronic cataloging** of the complete John Adams Library collection
 - **Typed transcriptions** of Adams's manuscript annotations for all books with interpretive or commentative notes by Adams
 - A major **gallery exhibition**, entitled *John Adams Unbound*, open from September 22, 2006 through April 1, 2007
 - Development and launch of the John Adams Library **website**, www.johnadamslibrary.org
 - **Digitization of selected volumes** from the John Adams Library collection.

BPL SchoolRooms

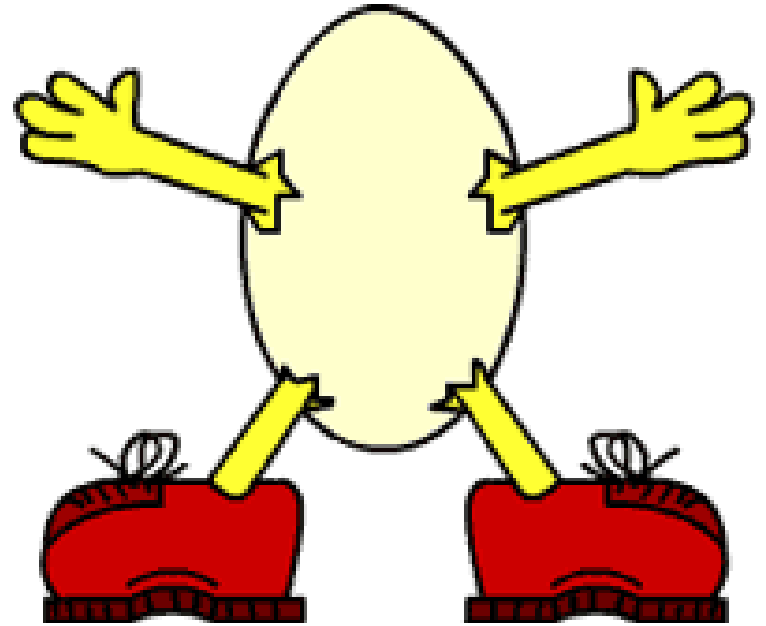
- First City and Public Library to implement the K-12 education portal
- K-12 education portal that aligns education and library resources using the curriculum frameworks
- All pages in SchoolRooms were built by teachers and librarians - the people who know exactly what topics have to be covered and where to find the best information.

BPL SchoolRooms in Action



Finding Balance

- Expect YP contributions to not always be money
- Gain wins through involvement and time investments
- While making the events fun, ensure that library agendas are still focus



Partnerships are key

- The Library and development office already have strong ties
- The YPs bring some funding to the Library, but most of all, they bring awareness
- Engaging internal/library YP's to test concepts for recruiting external YP's

Next Steps:

- Black tie Gala for the Foundation
- Theme: technology
- Computers available at the event to test drive new web site
- End results: money raised, guests have fun, guests learn about what's new at the Library

Q & A!

Melanie Damsker
Manager of Special Events and Programs
Boston Public Library Foundation
Melanie@bplf.com

&

Ken Peterson
Coordinator of Services to Libraries
Boston Public Library
kpeterson@bpl.org