Appendix 5: Fun Stuff

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    Satirical piece giving 25 possible responses to difficult patrons reprinted with permission from
    Steve Barnhart, Eagle Rock Consulting.
Summer 1962
Ron Koertge
Author and Poet

When I worked at the library, my favorite job
was opening up in the morning. Strolling toward
the big, wooden doors I felt like the manager
in a store of ideas.

If it weren't for those long hours at the desk, I might
still be there. But I not only watched the days pass,
I marked each one with an indelible stamp.

When I told the head librarian, he was disappointed.
“Should you change your mind,” he said, “your job
will be waiting.”

He sounded like the vicar in a book about a plucky
but misguided lad who goes off to the city.
I pictured my job waiting for me at the crossroads
or lying by the grave of the person I almost was,
it’s face on its paws.
Cleaning Book Jackets or Covers (various approaches are working)
One idea we use for cleaning book covers: Huggies Natural Care Unscented Baby Wipes! Bound To Stay Bound Company passed along that idea. It works especially well for their buckram covers, as it doesn’t harm the protective coating. It works well for the plastic covers too.

Marge Asplund—Dixon Public Library

A hint I picked up elsewhere is using wet wipes (baby wipes) to clean plastic book covers and also children’s books without covers that have a sort of plastic finish. They not only remove dirt but sticky who knows what. Also, they are very convenient. We use the cheap house brand from Target or Wal-Mart.

Shirley Wilhelmsen—Squaw Grove Public Library

Best book jacket cleaner: Goo Gone (if it’s sticky or on cloth bindings) Windex for ordinary dirt on plastic covers. Best remover for adhesive residue: Goo Gone

Chrys Rudnik—Park Forest Public Library

The best cleaner for book jackets is Dow Bathroom Cleaner sprayed on a cleaning fabric (not paper towel), then used gently on jacket. Everyone else seems to leave a residue!

Ruthann Yeaton—Creston-Dement Public Library District

We were told by Bound to Stay Bound that the best way to clean their prebound books is with baby wipes. So, we always have them on hand.

Jane Koehler—Woodstock Public Library

Best book jacket cleaner I have used is Baby Wipes.

Judy Gilbert—Tripp Elementary School

The best thing for removing sticky tape residue from book covers is GOO GONE. Let it sit for a bit and the sticky wipes right off.

Kathy Hoel—North Suburban District Library

Cleaning Pages, Including Stain Removal
Patrons have been known to think of our books as their own when reading for school assignments. We have seen sentences underlined and editorial comments have been scribbled in the margins. To clean the pages of the book properly, the following supplies are needed: an Opaline pad, a Pink Pearl eraser, and a soft bristle brush. Begin by rotating and pressing the Opaline pad between the palms of the hands to release the cleaning granules. Gently rub the granules over the dirt or pencil marks. The granules will absorb the dirt. Use the brush to wipe them away. More difficult marks will need to be removed with a Pink Pearl eraser. Work with a light touch and use small strokes.

The Staff of the Vernon Area Public Library District

The best way I’ve found to separate pages of a book that are stuck together by gum or some other unknown substance is to soften the material with heat from an iron. Put a piece of plain white paper under and over them are at home waiting to be run through the washing machine.

Iris Henderson—Park Ridge Public Library
the stuck pages. Press lightly with a hot iron on the covering white paper. See if the pages will peel apart. If it doesn’t peel easily, press again until the material softens and the pages peel apart. Once the pages are apart you can do any or all of a variety of things, depending on the consistency and quantity of the material involved and on the stability of the paper:

- Scrape off excess material with a table knife or comparable tool.
- Wipe off water-soluble material with a damp cloth if the paper can tolerate wiping with water.
- Place clean paper against the material and press again from the outside through clean paper to blot some of the material into the paper. This may need to be repeated many times to remove materials such as gum. (See Dealing with gum)

Some brownish or colored stains on pages of a book can be removed or reduced by treating them with hydrogen peroxide. Place a piece of plain white paper under the sheet with the stain. Put a drop of hydrogen peroxide on the stain. If the stain goes through the paper, apply the hydrogen peroxide from both sides of the page. Put a piece of plain white paper on top of the treated stain. If the moisture goes through the paper, put in another piece of paper to absorb the moisture. Close the book and place it under a weight or a stack of books so it is held flat while it dries. Allow it to dry overnight. If the stain is reduced but not eliminated the procedure can be repeated. If the stain doesn’t budge with one treatment it probably will not respond to a second treatment. If the paper is slightly wrinkled, press with a hot iron with plain white paper above and below the pressed page.

*Iris Henderson—Park Ridge Public Library*

**Dealing With Gum**

**On pages:**

A good way to get gum off book pages: put the injured volume in the freezer for 30 minutes (don’t forget it or you’ll be dealing with damp pages and mold). Snap off the wad of gum and the book’s nearly as good as new.

*Eileen Sullivan—Cook Memorial Public Library District*

Gum may leave an oily residue, which may be removable with a spot removal solvent. However the spot remover may also affect inks on the paper. Oily residues just may not be removable.

*Iris Henderson—Park Ridge Public Library*

**On carpeting:**

The best way to get gum off the carpet: apply ice (preferably wrapped in a paper towel to prevent freeze bite) directly to the spot. When stiff, scrape up gum with a spackle knife (scissor blade, etc.)

*Eileen Sullivan—Cook Memorial Public Library District*

**General Book Repair**

Torn pages get taped with “magic tape” on both sides. Loose pages will get the edge painted with “norbond” glue then inserted in the book. The book is then clamped at the spine with binder clips.

To mend a cracked spine—if it is split open—measure the correct length of binder tape, moisten it and attach to one then the other side of the two pieces. Use several rubber bands around the width of the book and insert a “bone” under the rubber bands and along the spine to help secure the glued part.

If a clump of pages is pulling away from the spine then simply paint some norbond onto the spine tape and secure the book for 24 hours.

We have seen children’s artwork on the first page of a book. Often times there is no information on this page or if there is information it is repeated on the following page. You can do one of two things. Either cut the page out being very careful to only cut through that one page and not the next and secure the cut area with a strip of tape. (No information is lost.) Or you could cover the page with “studiotac” then simply secure the page to the inside of the cover. If you do have the bar code and date due slip on that page be sure that it is first transferred to the following page.

If a book comes back smelling funny simply enclose it in a plastic bag with baking soda. The baking soda will absorb the odors. Or stand it up and open so that the air can get to the pages. Keeping it away from heat is best as the glue could dry out.

We have been successful with ironing pages if they have gotten wet then dried and have become wrinkled. Be sure to sandwich the wrinkled page between two sheets of paper to avoid scorching.

*The Staff of the Vernon Area Public Library District*
A few of the things our staff say are helpful are EZ Blaster, absorbent paper towels, a Xacto knife, sharp scissors, and a couple of various erasers. I know they use an art eraser occasionally. The other eraser is called a dirt eraser (I think they got it from Demco), and it can actually get rid of the majority of crayon marks (or at least lighten them) that sometimes decorate returning books. And sometimes they ‘wrap’ a book with baking soda to get rid of smells. We use EZ Blaster instead of Goo Gone, since it is obtainable through a library supply company. She has a list of the five companies we use, in case anyone is interested. She said the dirt eraser is from one of the companies, but it might not be Demco, she just had it in that bag to contain the dust.

Theresa Winterbauer—DeKalb Public Library

Disinfecting Surfaces
Keep a container of disinfectant wipes at your reference desk. These are great for disinfecting phone, computer, etc. that are used by multiple staff members. This cuts down on sick days!

The Staff of the Rolling Meadows Library

Label Removal
Here’s a good little tip that I use. If you have a book or item (such as something purchased for a gift or prize) that has a sticky label or price tag on it use a hair dryer on the sticker or label for a minute or two, this will loosen the adhesive backing and it will peel right off.

Jackie Weiss—Cahokia Public Library District

To get old labels off of plastic containers use Goo Gone. Apply Goo Gone, wait a few minutes, then scrape off with straight edged razor blade. It’s easier and faster than a paper towel or cloth, which means you don’t have to sit there and inhale the Goo Gone so long!

The Staff of the Rolling Meadows Library

Occupational Hazards – Paper Cuts
My best tip is for an occupational hazard—paper cuts. Cut up a band aid and tape the cut with one of the two tape portions. Throw the rest away. The cut’s healed the next day. Actually any tape will do but I figure that’s the most sanitary way to go.

Barbara J. Lintner—The Urbana Free Library

Shelf Size for Non-Automated Libraries
Rule of thumb: To estimate the size of your collection, measure your shelf list cards. One inch equals approximately 100 cards.

Lois B. Schultz—Independent Consultant

Storytime Tips
Use small, craft sized, clothespins to attach nametags to kids.

The Staff of the Rolling Meadows Library

On Making Flannel Board Stories
I use Pellon, which is fabric stiffener. It comes in several thicknesses. I get the heaviest weight that you can still see through. I trace the pictures from the book, outlining them in black. Then I use colored pencils.

Unless it is absolutely necessary I cut out the figures in a cloud so that there is some white space around the outline. This is faster to cut out and easier for very young children to handle.

Sometimes I tell the stories with the pieces, and sometimes I use the pieces as follow-up for the theme, handing out the pieces as the last activity, and having the children put them on the board in response to a cue, e.g. “Who has an animal that says, ‘Moo’?”

Clara Sheffer—Niles Public Library District
The Strangest Thing I Ever Found in a Book Was…

Chewing tobacco — already chewed and spit into book
Cards
Receipts
Pictures
Love letter — a favorite of the Evans Public Library
Newspaper clippings
Dollar Bills
Half-eaten sucker — luckily the sticky part was stinking out of the book
Flattened cigarettes
Baby tooth — THE favorite of the Evans Public Library
Two fifty dollar bills in a birthday card signed “Love, Grandma”
Opera tickets
Half-eaten candy bar
25 Things to Say to Difficult People*

1. Thank you. We’re all refreshed and challenged by your unique point of view.
2. The fact that no one understands you doesn’t mean you’re an artist.
3. I don't know what your problem is, but I’ll bet it's hard to pronounce.
4. Any connection between your reality and mine is purely coincidental.
5. I have plenty of talent and vision. I just don't care.
6. I like you. You remind me of when I was young and stupid.
7. What am I? Flypaper for freaks?
8. I’m not being rude. You’re just insignificant.
9. I’m already visualizing the duct tape over your mouth.
10. I will always cherish the initial misconceptions I had about you.
11. It’s a thankless job, but I’ve got a lot of Karma to burn off.
12. Yes, I am an agent of Satan, but my duties are largely ceremonial.
13. How about never? Is never good for you?
14. I’m really easy to get along with once you people learn to worship me.
15. You sound reasonable...Time to up my medication.
16. I’ll try being nicer if you’ll try being smarter.
17. I’m out of my mind, but feel free to leave a message...
18. I don’t work here. I’m a consultant.
19. Who me? I just wander from room to room.
20. My toys! My toys! I can’t do this job without my toys!
21. It might look like I’m doing nothing, but at the cellular level I’m really quite busy.
22. At least I have a positive attitude about my destructive habits.
23. You are validating my inherent mistrust of strangers.
24. I see you’ve set aside this special time to humiliate yourself in public.
25. Someday, we'll look back on this, laugh nervously and change the subject.

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