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Editorial

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For those of us serving in the academic community a new year has just begun – the fall semester or quarter is upon us. Students have returned to campus and summer-quiet library halls are now ringing with stage “whispers,” book drops filling with materials rediscovered on unpacking day.

While the natural world is beginning to wind down for a good winter sleep, the academic librarian attempts to muster fresh energy for the coming year. Some of us undoubtedly greet this new year with enthusiasm while others need a jump-start to run at full speed.

For me, the start of the new academic calendar came much too soon. Where did summer go? What about that long list of summer jobs I wanted to accomplish?

As I sat through my eighth Faculty Workshop (how I admire older colleagues – trooping through their twenty-third or thirty-fifth!) I tried to remember something from the previous school year that had marked me - something that made a difference for me in how I approached my job, in how I viewed my contribution to my institution and community.

Instantly a night in February came back to me. Point Loma Nazarene University was hosting our annual Writers’ Symposium-By-The-Sea. Though it was my night for reference duty I slipped out (with the permission of my boss, of course) to hear the featured speaker of the evening, author Ray Bradbury.

I have been a reader of Mr. Bradbury’s work for more than half of my life. Though born and raised in California I have lived in Green Town,

Illinois and traveled to Mars via Bradbury’s pages. I expected to be entertained that Thursday evening.

What I did not expect was to return to the Reference Desk with a bounce in my step – changed in the way I perceived the library and my place within it.

Ray Bradbury began by giving a

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history of his life, peppered with the sage advice of eighty-plus years as a human and a writer. “I never went to

college,” he said, “but I went to the library two to three times every week - in three years I graduated from the library.” He continued by relating a story about having finally discovered, with the help of a librarian, his perfect match in an author, a surprise world opened to him by a librarian who cared enough to get to know him. “Live in the library!” he exclaimed.

Our library patrons may attend classes; they may not. (This is true for public library patrons and for those in places of higher learning.) Our patrons may leave holding diplomas; they may not. But because of who we are and what we do as librarians – especially as Christian librarians – they may leave our places having “graduated from the library.” We truly have the opportunity to impact the lives of those we serve.

For me this is the thought that gives me renewed energy for the coming year. My hope is that it will give you the same.

Blessings and best wishes for an Autumn of renewed strength and vision,

Anne-Elizabeth Powell,
Editor-In-Chief