



Technically Speaking

The Newsletter of CATS

Fall/Winter 2009-10

Also in this issue:

Open Source Software1
Presidential Meowsings ...2
Annual meeting pics3

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Tom Cohn

Open Source Software In Libraries

By Ted Gutmann

On October 22nd, CATS presented a program entitled “Open Source Software in Libraries” at the South Country Library in Bellport. The audience included representatives from many different types of libraries, including public, academic and special libraries in Suffolk and Nassau counties.

The program started with a presentation by Dr. Andrew White, Director of the Health Science Library at Stony Brook University on his library’s experience using open source software to create their website. The Health Science Library has used several different open source content-management programs such as Plone and Joomla to create the different iterations of their site. Dr. White’s presentation was

followed by a presentation by Joseph Balsamo, Head of Systems at the Health Science Library at Stony Brook University. Mr. Balsamo spoke about how his department used several open source software packages to create and manage a distinct and separate network from the hospital. Dr. White explained that the Health Science Library found that the major advantage of using open source software

***Technically Speaking’s* Featured Quotation**

“Watcha doin 2.0 with your books?”

— Steven Abram,
Sirsi/Dynix Corp. and library visionary, at CATS annual meeting, December, 2008.

Presidential 'Meowsings'

By Ted Gutmann

It is hard to believe that the year is almost over! Although the time has passed by quickly, it certainly has been a busy and productive year for CATS.

I enjoyed attending the annual SCLA Dinner where I announced the results of our election for the 2010 CATS board. Also attending this year's SCLA dinner were CATS members Robert Cognato (Deer Park Public Library) and Seth McQuale (New York Institute of Technology). Both Robert and Seth were selected from a lottery of CATS members and they won complimentary tickets to this year's dinner (compliments of SCLA).

Looking back over the past year, I'm glad to see that we have some new faces on the board in addition to some of our long-serving members. Bob Johnson (Port Jefferson Free Library), Laura Giuliani (Huntington Public Library) and Danielle Zubiller (Brentwood Public Library) have all just about completed their first term on the CATS board, and it has been great having them along. I hope that they will continue to serve for many more years. It has also been great to have had

the contributions of several non-board members throughout the year: Tom Cohn has volunteered his time to serve as our newsletter editor, Michael Aloï has done a great job running all of our Cataloging Roundtable meetings, and Cynthia Guzzo once again did a great job of organizing this past year's annual library tour.

A highlight from this past year is our revised website (<http://sclacats.wordpress.com>). We also successfully got our Technology Information Forum committee off the ground. We have already had a few Technology Information Forum meetings and we look forward to continuing them on a monthly basis.

I look forward to handing over the presidency of the CATS board to Bob Johnson at the end of this year. Bob brings a lot of energy and new ideas to the division, and I think he'll make a great CATS president. I'm sure we can all look forward to a great year in 2010. ●

Editor's Note:
Technically
Speaking now of-
fers an electronic-
only delivery op-
tion. If interested,
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— *continued from p. 1*
was the ability to customize and to tailor-fit the software to fit specific needs, something that is often neither practical nor possible with off-the-shelf commercial software.

The next speaker was Ted Gutmann, from the Emma S. Clark Memorial Library. Mr. Gutmann demonstrated an open-source email program called Scalix (www.scalix.com) that he is using for his library. Mr. Gutmann implemented the free Scalix open-source Community Edition a few years ago as a replacement for an existing Microsoft Exchange system. Mr. Gutmann explained that one of the nicest things about Scalix was its similarity to the Exchange/Outlook user interface. Users needed no additional training to use the new program and were able to adapt to it immediately.

After a short break, Bob Johnson, from the Port Jefferson Free Library, spoke about a number of open source alternatives to common commercial software applications. To complement his presentation, Mr. Johnson distributed an excellent printed list with the open source product descriptions and URL references. Furthermore, Mr. Johnson, made up enough CD-ROMs for each of the attendees to take home that included all of the open

source software packages that were included in his presentation.

Finishing off the program was Dominic Iadicicco from South Country Library. Mr. Iadicicco explained that he was given an unusual mandate several years ago from a former director of the library to replace most of the library's existing commercial software with open source alternatives. As a result, Mr. Iadicicco has turned the South Country Library into a showcase of successful implementation of open source software in a public library setting. Mr. Iadicicco has made extensive use of open source software for everything from OPACs to firewalls. In addition to explaining his experiences with open source software, Mr. Iadicicco also demonstrated several programs including the pfSense open source firewall (www.pfsense.com). Mr. Iadicicco collaborated with Bob Johnson to create another wonderful printed list of open source software products. Both this list and the list from Mr. Johnson's presentation can be found online at the CATS website (<http://sclacats.wordpress.com/>).

Overall, it was a very well-rounded and informative program with topics ranging from basic to advanced. There were about forty attendees, and CATS hopes to use this as a first step into future programs on this topic. ●

Gurpeet Singh (right) of Ekartha, Inc. and Tom McCormack (center), of Mindshift, were the featured speakers at the CATS annual meeting on December 9th at the Brentwood Public Library. Their topic was “Computing in the Cloud.” “Cloud computing is poised to do for technology what the electrical grid did for power,” Mr. Singh stated.

Below, l to r: CATsers Bob Johnson, Danielle Zubiller, and Ted Gutmann.



**Welcome 2010 : Did you know that 2010 has
been named the "Year of Cataloging Research"
by the Implementation Task Group of the Asso-
ciation for Library Collections and Technical
Services (ALCTS)?**

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Welcome to your membership in CATS!

Tech Services **Cataloging Roundtable**
Software training programs

LIL Conference Program **CATS**
Library Tour Annual Meeting/Program

Technology Information Forum

“The CATS Tag Cloud”