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SOLINET and Partners Evaluate Recovery Needs at Libraries Affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

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Two topics are offered through this series. The one-day Disaster Preparedness class will provide the training necessary to plan, organize, and execute a disaster plan and a salvage operation, with demonstrations of salvage techniques such as packing out wet materials, air-drying books, separating and drying manuscripts, and drying photographic materials. The Hurricane Preparedness class is a must for libraries and archives in at-risk areas. The one-day class will address the general issues involved in developing a disaster plan. It will show how to make an institution more storm-proof and teach what to do before, during, and after a storm, including where to look for available assistance.

SOLINET encourages library staff and archivists anywhere in the region to consult the class schedule on the SOLINET website (www.solinet.net/preservation/disasterseries) and select the class date and location that is most convenient. These classes are available to all, not just SOLINET member librarians and staff.

SOLINET AND PARTNERS EVALUATE RECOVERY NEEDS AT LIBRARIES AFFECTED BY HURRICANES KATRINA AND RITA

In partnership with libraries, state agencies, and library consortia throughout the region and with support from The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, SOLINET will perform a two-month evaluation of the libraries impacted by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita and, in February 2006, present a set of recommendations for long-term recovery. Partners in this effort include state libraries and archives in all affected states (Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas), Amigos Library Services (TX), the Louisiana Library Network (LOUIS), and other state-based consortia serving impacted libraries. In addition, SOLINET will be coordinating evaluation efforts with those underway on behalf of other cultural organizations to share information and identify opportunities for joint recovery activity.

The 2005 hurricanes affected libraries throughout a large geographic area along the Gulf Coast. Travel restrictions and health hazards in the hardest hit areas meant it was sometimes weeks before staff could begin to assess damage at their libraries. Although they are individually at various stages of response, most libraries and archives have by now completed damage assessment and are working on collection stabilization and recovery. According to SOLINET Executive Director Kate Nevins, "A regional evaluation at this time will be valuable for identifying needs for long-term recovery, needs that libraries will still be struggling to address long after the initial outpouring of support has faded."

The evaluation will seek to identify: (1) needs and strategies for short-term and long-term collection recovery, (2) support and services that would better assist libraries in immediate response to future disasters, and (3) opportunities for improving hurricane preparedness and response planning in libraries. Project partners, representatives from impacted libraries, and preservation and disaster recovery experts will meet to develop recommendations in all three areas based on information gathered through damage assessment reports. A report on the evaluation effort will be made available through SOLINET's website.

BARRON PRIZE AWARD NOMINATIONS

The Gloria Barron Prize for Young Heroes, founded by young adult author T.A. Barron, seeks nominations for its 2006 awards. The Barron Prize honors young people ages 8 to 18 who have shown leadership and courage in public service to people and our planet. Each year, ten national winners each receive \$2,000 to support their service work or higher education. Nomination deadline is April 30. For more information and to nominate -- as well as to request or download free heroes educational materials -- visit <http://www.barronprize.org/>