

RE:refresh!

News from Middletown Thrall Library's Reference Department
ISSUE # 3
Published May 22, 2009

"To every answer you can find a new question." a Yiddish proverb

From the Head of Reference Mary Susan Flannery Climes

Welcome to our third issue of *RE:refresh!*

This is where Middletown Thrall Library's Reference Department updates you on some of its many ongoing efforts to empower you with the very best research tools and resources available!

We encourage you to take advantage of our work and to make full use of all these free services, many of which Thrall members can access at home.

NOVEL Databases, New Free Encyclopedias

www.thrall.org/databases

Due to changes in New York State's NOVEL program, through which we gain access to state-level funded databases, the following databases are no longer available: *Informe*, *General Science Collection*, *Topic Search*, *Science Reference Center*, and *Infotrac Junior*.

Now for the good news: we now have access to *Proquest Platinum*, an excellent general-purpose article database, as well as *Grolier Online*, which includes *Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia* and *Encyclopedia Americana*.

The next time you need to look something up, please consider these free resources, along with the many other databases and Virtual Reference works available to you.

Thrall cardholders can also access these services at home through our website: www.thrall.org

Something about the Author

www.thrall.org/databases

This database, which specializes in information on children's and young adult authors and illustrators, provides access to Volume 187 of *Something about the Author* and forward. Thrall has the earlier volumes in print. Members of Thrall can access this service freely at home.

Good News, Unusual Stories

www.thrall.org/current

Our Current Interests Center (CIC) is where you can browse the world of news by topic. Two of our latest additions feature news sources providing positive and uplifting news stories as well as offbeat and curious happenings of the day. Once at the CIC, click **Good News** or **Unusual** to begin browsing.

Swine Flu / Pandemic Issues

www.thrall.org/special

When Swine Flu (H1N1) first became national news, we updated our Special Coverage Center's "Pandemic Issues" guide to include information, news, and advisories from NY/Federal sources.

Genocide Awareness

www.thrall.org/special

This information guide, also available in our Special Coverage Center, was created in observance of Genocide Awareness Month (April 2009). Use this guide to quickly find books, videos, and websites on historical and contemporary aspects of genocide.

Spirituality Subject Browser, News

www.thrall.org/spirituality

We created a library catalog subject browser for our Spirituality information guide so you quickly locate related materials throughout the library system. Click "**Explore books**" on the menu to begin. A **News** section has also been added to this guide.

Job Search Computer Coming

Thanks to the Friends of Middletown Thrall Library, Inc., we will soon have a workstation dedicated to job searchers. Please inquire at Reference in the coming weeks for more details.

Thrall Reference Department

Mary Susan Flannery Climes, Head of Reference

Middletown Thrall Library

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Ask Our Librarians: (845) 341-5461

Ask us on the Web: www.thrall.org/ask

For past *RE:refresh!* issues: thrall.org/refresh

Health & Wellness Guide

www.thrall.org/health

Since 1998, Thrall's health guide on the Web provided convenient paths to information sources on a variety of health topics.

In May 2009, we expanded and improved our Health and Wellness guide to:

- inform researchers how and where health information is categorized and shelved
- make it easier to locate health and wellness materials in the library system
- include live news feeds
- cover more topics and consumer-oriented resources (such as those in Medline Plus from the U.S. National Library of Medicine).

Investments & Personal Finance

www.thrall.org/invest

Our "Links for Investors" web guide also experienced a makeover, complete with a mini guide to locating related information in our library as well as a comprehensive guide you can use to instantly browse business and financial topics in the library system catalog.

Library Catalog "Start Page"

www.thrall.org/catalog

We recently improved our library catalog start page, which you would normally see before jumping into the RCLS system catalog (HIP).

Our intent, in doing so, was to make it much easier for you to browse and access (just by clicking) new and upcoming titles (fiction or nonfiction) as well as to give you the ability to browse major topics in the catalog and check out all of our other free services for readers – all from one convenient spot!

Expanded Edition of RAVES!

www.thrall.org/raves

Thrall's RAVES! Reader's Advisory Service experienced a major upgrade: you can now browse a number of the latest titles readers recommend in three separate categories: Fiction, Nonfiction, and Biography.

The corresponding RAVES! RSS feed now also indicates the type of book (fiction, etc.) for each title.

We encourage you to use RAVES! to discover some new titles or authors – or to suggest *books you like!*

News Photos & Videos

www.thrall.org/current

Our Current Interests Center now gives you instant links to photos / videos in local, national, or international news sources. Just click **Photos** or **Videos** once you reach the web address above.

Thrall Web Search

www.thrall.org/guides

While you can, and sometimes must, use a regular search engine to find certain websites, and spend a good deal of time sifting through dozens of irrelevant results, Thrall offers you an alternative: many convenient web guides linking to thousands of key websites for nearly every major topic imaginable.

You can browse our guides or use our newly created **Web Guides Search**, which:

- shows where we cataloged various sites
- helps you discover new and related websites
- can provide hints or alternative keywords
- highlights terms found in search results
- lets you limit searches to specific topic (for example: Literature, American History, Law)
- suggests related web guides and databases
- enables you to search the entire library system catalog or even the rest of the Internet – all without you having to retype your search terms

Our Web Search continues to grow every day, for your benefit, as we review and incorporate new web resources and links to relevant library materials.

All the "Best"

www.thrall.org/readyref

What were the "best"-rated novels or films of all time? The top songs and recording artists? Who holds the world record for most... *whatever?* Visit our **Ready Reference Center** at the above address and click on "**Lists**" or "**World Records**" on the menu to find out. Some sites, such as Listology, invite you to vote on, or create, "best of" lists.

From Our Blogs...

www.thrall.org/blogs

If you haven't visited our blogs in a while, here are some samples of recent posts:

Deep Solar Minimum – An update on Earth's Sun

Quantum Computing – Computers of the future!

World Digital Library – Cultural treasures worldwide

Da Vinci Code Fans Rejoice – A Dan Brown preview

Our blogs are updated regularly. You can subscribe to any of their RSS feeds to get automatic updates.

Especially for Gardeners

www.thrall.org/readyref

The **Gardening** section of our **Ready Reference Center** recently grew to feature information on trees, landscaping, plant care, green gardening, and more. Enjoy free tips from Cornell Cooperative Extension, National Gardening Association, and others.

Local Publications Online

www.thrall.org/local

Our Local Links information guide highlights local community interest websites in many categories. A new **Local Publications** section features free online editions of major publications in and around Orange County and the Hudson Valley. Free print copies of these same publications are often available at Thrall.