

RE:refresh!

Reference Service News from Middletown Thrall Library

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"...the great ocean of truth lay all undiscovered before me." Isaac Newton

Welcome to our 7th issue of *RE:refresh!* This is where Thrall's Reference Department updates you on its latest efforts to empower you with the *best* research tools and resources available! Issues of *RE:refresh!* can also be downloaded from our website at www.thrall.org/refresh

Library System Migration

Soon, in December 2011, the Ramapo Catskill Library System (RCLS), along with Middletown Thrall Library and other RCLS member libraries, will make the transition to new library system software called *Symphony*.

This transition will introduce some changes and options, including a new online library catalog, which you can preview at www.thrall.org/newpac

New features you can look forward to include:

- The ability to request specific volumes or editions of an item from home! This includes DVDs, magazines, multi-volume works, yearly editions of popular works, and other publications.
- The ability to select where – at what library – you would like to pick up items you have requested!
- The ability to pay for fines at home through PayPal.
- Telephone notifications will become an option. If you are not signed up for our free e-mail notification service, an automated telephone call will let you know when a requested item arrives. If you'd rather avoid the computer voice, we'd love to e-mail you! Just ask us to update your library account!

Some other things to consider:

- You will be able to check out items during this migration.
- Most of our databases should continue to be available.
- Only items physically presented at the Circulation Desk can be renewed during the migration.
- No library cards will be issued/ replaced during migration.

Please note: any lists you may have saved in Aqua-Browser's "My Discoveries" feature will *not* carry over to the new system, so please save or print them immediately.

Thrall Reference Department

Mary Susan Flannery Climes, Head of Reference

Call Our Reference Desk: (845) 341-5461

or Ask a Librarian online: www.thrall.org/ask

Reference Blog: www.thrall.org/refblog

Guides & Databases: www.thrall.org/guides

(Library System Migration continued)

We thank you in advance for your patience and understanding with our own library staff as they get accustomed to the new system! Any *additional* information we receive from RCLS will be added to our **Reference Service News** blog (www.thrall.org/refblog).

If you have any questions or concerns, please speak with our librarians, call us at (845) 341-5454, or ask us a question online at www.thrall.org/ask.

eBooks Service Update

Amazon Kindle users may now participate in the free eBooks service provided through the Ramapo Catskill Library System. Thrall members, who own either a Kindle eReader or use Amazon's Kindle software, can choose from many Kindle-compatible titles in the eBooks catalog.

Full details on that process, plus a direct link to Kindle-compatible titles within the catalog, can be found in our **Reference Services** blog: www.thrall.org/refblog

Updates in Our Information Guides www.thrall.org/guides

Our guides to library items *and* Web resources are updated throughout the year as we identify and catalog potentially useful information and services. The following guides experienced *major* updates in recent weeks:

American History (www.thrall.org/history) – *All new!*

Booklovers (www.thrall.org/booklovers)

- Expanded listings in the **Book Awards** section
- More sites in the **eBook Providers – Free** section

Library Resources (www.thrall.org/libres) - Many new online exhibits in the **Virtual & Digital Libraries** section.

Ready Reference Center (www.thrall.org/readyref)

- Expanded listings in **Education - Online Learning**
- "Additions" were made to the **Mathematics** section ;-)
- **Writing** – Now includes **Organizations, Markets**

Special Coverage Center (www.thrall.org/special)

- **Election 2012:** Covering the U.S. Presidential election. Includes: Candidates, Political Parties, All about Voting, Making Informed Decisions, Campaign Financing, Conventions, Polls, and more.
- **Hydraulic Fracturing:** "Fracking" news, reports, debates

Spirituality (www.thrall.org/spirituality)

- A new **Terminology** section was established.

Three New Publications

www.thrall.org/docs

As part of our ongoing information awareness efforts, we create and provide free publications to the public on topics such as research techniques, critical thinking, and more.

We recently published three new documents:

Deeper Readings: This is for readers who welcome some fresh ideas on getting more information, insight, and enjoyment out of what they read.

Information Overload: Tips and strategies for anyone confronting “too much information.”

Maximizing Your Capacities: Increase your ability to work with information.

Free copies of these publications are available in print at the library (by the Reference desk) as well as at our website (at the link above) in the “**Awareness**” and “**Readers' Advisory**” sections of our **Publications** page.

Virtual Reference Library (VRL) Updates

www.thrall.org/vrl

Our “VRL” has *three* major additions:

American Decades (2000 – 2009): This continues upon **American Decades Primary Sources**, which covers the period from 1900 to 1999. American Decades is described by the publisher as “a cross-disciplinary source for junior and high school students and teachers, public librarians, and general researchers who need a single, consistent reference to document and analyze periods of contemporary American social history.”

The Encyclopedia of Political Science: From the publisher (CQ Press): “TEPS brings together a distinguished editorial board and over 600 distinguished and rising scholars to chronicle and assess the core issues that have long concerned students of politics. This comprehensive, multi-volume work traces the evolution of political theories, concepts, research frameworks, and political practices from across the world. As it examines the interplay of political ideas and processes, the encyclopedia also conveys the vitality and excitement of politics in practice.”

Gale Encyclopedia of Children's Health (2nd edition, 2011): An updated edition with over 200 new entries. Topics include pediatric diseases and disorders, physical, cognitive, and behavioral development issues, and more.

Members of Thrall can log in (with their library cards) to access these “always-available” reference works at home. *Anyone* can access these titles *within* the library.

RAVES! – Faster & Easier than Ever!

www.thrall.org/raves

You just read a *great* book. If you only had the time, you would probably like to suggest it to other readers – *right*? Well, now you can “rave” about a book in under a minute! When you visit our **RAVES!** page and click the **Suggest** button, you can instantly add “quick comments” or subject tags to your post! While there, be sure to check out some recent recommendations from *other readers!*

NOVELNY Updates

The **New York Online Virtual Library** (NOVEL) now offers all New York State residents access to **JobNow**, a free service featuring “expert resume assistance, live interview preparation, and career coaching” from “online job coaches” and “trained writing experts.”

Also available through NOVEL: Adult Learning Center, which offers “one-on-one academic coaching, a practice test center, and online resources to help you achieve your learning and career goals.”

You can access either of these services through our website (www.thrall.org) by going to our **Databases** page and clicking on **Jobs and Careers**.

What's Happening in the World?

www.thrall.org/current

Our **Current Interests Center** lets you **browse the world of news by topic**. From anthropology to viral videos and *beyond*, it's all there and ready in a couple of clicks!

Reference Collection Highlights

The following reference works are just some of the many additions to our **Reference collection**. These items, which do not circulate, are always available to you! You can locate them by either asking a librarian or by going to their respective call numbers (provided below):

The American Economy: A Historical Encyclopedia

Call number: **REF 330.973 AME**

Explore the history of the United States economy through essays, primary source documents, and more.

American Musical Theatre: A Chronicle

Call number: **REF 782.14 BOR**

Arranged chronologically, this reference work highlights major and critically-acclaimed theatrical works and performances along with select biographies.

Encyclopedia of African American Music

Call number: **REF 780.8996**

Three volumes offer 500+ articles by over 100 scholars writing about genres, movements, styles, and more.

The Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine

Call number: **REF 616.003 GAL**

Six volumes of in-depth information designed to be comprehensive yet understandable.

Peterson's Four Year Colleges 2012

Call number: **REF 378.73 PET**

Will you, or someone you know, soon be considering colleges? The latest edition of this guide (published annually) examines over 2,500 accredited four-year colleges and universities within the United States and Canada. Learn about each institution, their campus settings, enrollments, academic programs, and more.

The Thirties, Forties, Fifties... [etc.] in America

Call numbers beginning with: **REF 973.92**

Each multi-volume set (published by Salem Press) is arranged by *decade* and explores, in each period, the history and culture of America through essays, maps, illustrations, and more. **Members of Thrall** can also access electronic editions of these reference works *online* through the **Salem History** database by going to www.thrall.org/databases and clicking on **History**.