Keeping Up Upkeep

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Renewal. That was the charge from Sarah Beasley, our president for the 2007–2008 year, to the OLA masses. And I, conscientious mass that I am, decided to take up the banner during the year. And what a year! After much experimentation and lengthy explanations to my spouse and various legal authorities, I have come up with some handy-dandy tips guaranteed to make going to work a transformative and renewing adventure.

Don't know what to do with all that complimentary chocolate you dumped out of the vendors’ bowls and into your freebie ALA conference bag last summer? Melt in a microwave and mix with shredded library fine slips and rubber-bands. Slather over shoulders and legs for an exfoliating experience you'll never forget.

Tired of the sight of teenagers perennially bored out of their minds during your carefully-planned craft hours? Have them paint your nails with scenarios from their favorite YA novel. Give freebie reading tattoo stickers to those who can fit you in for weekly appointments.

Need a revenue generator for your library? Pulp withdrawn serials and layer it in bathtubs, letting it ferment into a mush. When it heats up to something over body temperature, have the Friends of the Library group sell it as a rejuvenating spa bath. Charge extra for baths tinted different colors with makeup from lost-and-found.

Offer your patrons programs to stave off dementia via mental exercises. Start by having them figure out library staffing schedules during peak vacation times.

Want to shake up your wardrobe? Try on various cardigans left behind by inattentive committee members out on a lunch break.

Face lifts too expensive? Try a low-cost alternative using binding clamps and thermal glue strips. Have pillows strewn about the workplace to make sure you have safe places to land when you pass out every five minutes.

Teach the children who attend your story hour time how to sew couture knock-offs. If they or their parents complain, tell them you have a collection of very large Barbie dolls.

Looking for ways to keep your staff mentally nimble? Inform them that due to budget cuts, the main library is closing and all materials and units have to be shoved into the smallest branch library. Two weeks from today.

No need to thank me for these suggestions. Just make sure to donate to my legal defense fund.