

ILA/ACRL Newsletter

vol. 7, no. 2, July 1997

FROM THE PRESIDENT

In this summer newsletter, you'll read about both spring and fall activities, even a mention of next spring. As President, I'm almost used to thinking about events happening 3-4 months from now—and in three to four months, I can think about relaxing a bit in the Scholarship Chair position.

Fall ILA Conference will be in Sioux City this October 8-10. Read the detailed article in the newsletter about our Chapter programming for the conference. The Chapter and ILA/GODORT are co-sponsoring a speech by Nancy Kranich on the impact of electronic resources on the public, focusing particularly on continued access. In addition, we are sponsoring a session by Karen Mason from the Iowa Women's Archives, and a panel discussion following the Kranich presentation, as well as holding our fall business meeting. Hope to see you all there. Other articles in this newsletter re-cap sessions from the Spring Conference, held in Iowa City on April 25. We had 109 attendees at the conference, and a good time was had by most. From observation alone, I can state the dessert buffet was eagerly embraced. I would like to compliment our session presenters for the high quality of their presentations. Bill Miller wrote a note following the conference, thanking us for the hospitality we had shown him. He seemed genuinely impressed with our level of organization and our list of activities. The Iowa Chapter received funding from the national ACRL to underwrite his trip here, which helped our profit margin on the conference. (Successful conferences are always preferable to charging dues to belong to the Chapter.)

On another funding note, I have unofficially heard from Bill Miller about one of our ACRL grant applications, submitted to seek financial support for the joint Iowa-Nebraska Spring conference. As noted at our April business meeting by Vice President Mary Beveridge, the joint conference is planned for May 8 1998 at Drake University. According to Bill Miller, we should receive \$700 in initiative grant funding to help with this conference. Word is still out on the para-professional grant funding request, which would help support an additional half-day conference on May 7, 1998. I expect to hear word on this grant at the ALA Annual Conference in San Francisco, and will post any news to the list serv.

As mentioned at the April business meeting, the Executive Board voted in March to grant \$575 to IPAL, to assist in establishing consortial arrangements with vendors. The money will be used to reimburse IPAL Resource Sharing Planning Committee members for their travel expenses at the ILA mileage rate, up to the limit of the grant, as they determine how to coordinate contacting of vendors for possible consortial pricing of various on-line resources.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED! Mary Beveridge asks me to remind you to consider volunteering for an ILA/ACRL committee or to stand for office. An application form is enclosed. [Editor's note: this form is available online at <http://www.iowaacrl.org/iacrldir/iacrivol.html>]

Enjoy this newsletter issue, and remember—if you are reading a co-worker's paper copy because you didn't receive a paper copy of your own---you are probably not a member of ILA/ACRL.

Please check your records and join up. See you in Sioux City.

--Mary McInroy, President ILA/ACRL

SPEAKERS FOR ILA/ACRL FALL

Nancy Kranich is Associate Dean of Libraries at New York University and serves on the ALA Executive Council. At ILA Fall Conference, her presentation is cosponsored by ILA/GODORT and ACRL. The presentation will be entitled "Ensuring the Public's Right to Know in a Digital Age: Librarians Make it Happen." Kranich has worked closely with Congressional and Executive Branch officials in trying to bridge the gap between the "information poor" and "information rich." Despite an increasing variety of electronic resources, the quality of government information has been in some cases reduced due to lack of standardization, shortage of retrospective data, and other problems. Kranich will discuss this situation in more detail and outline ways in which the library community may be able to help overcome the problems.

Panel Discussion: Following Kranich's presentation, a panel discussion, moderated by Daria Bossman (Morningside College), will focus on related topics. Panel members will be Carolyn Kohler (University of Iowa), Linda Scarth (Mount Mercy College), and Beth Clausen (University of Northern Iowa).

Karen Mason is Curator of the Iowa Women's Archives in the University of Iowa Libraries. Her presentation, sponsored by ILA/ACRL, is entitled "Remembering the Forgotten Women in Your Community." Mason will describe the purposes of the Iowa Women's Archives and provide examples of how the Archives is working with librarians across Iowa to seek out and preserve the materials that record the experiences of Iowa women from all eras and walks of life.

--Richard Reitsma, Northwestern College

Chair, Fall Program Committee

ILA/ACRL SPRING SUMMARY (APRIL 25, 1997)

WELCOMING REMARKS

Mary McInroy, President of ILA/ACRL welcomed the attendees with relief that the snow storms of two week ago were gone and we had a beautiful, sunny day.

Jon Whitmore, University of Iowa Provost since August 1996, applauded Iowa's academic libraries and referred to the University of Iowa Libraries' efforts on networking and distance education. From an administrative viewpoint, these efforts help broaden citizen support for the University of Iowa. He noted, though, his belief in the continuing value of print resources and urged a balanced approach to the various formats.

Barbara Dewey, University of Iowa Libraries Director for Information and Research Services, welcomed the attendees on behalf of the Libraries and conveyed regards from University Librarian Sheila Creth, who was out of town at another meeting.

John Goodin as Chair of the Spring Conference Program Committee also welcomed the attendees.

--*Peter Hartford, University of Iowa*

KEYNOTE ADDRESS -- GEARING UP BY LOOKING BACKWARDS

[address given by] William Miller

Miller, ACRL President and Director of Libraries, Florida Atlantic University, was introduced by John Goodin and immediately began to entertain, inform and provoke the thoughts of the audience. He brought greetings from ACRL, discussed some of the programs and outlined the strategic goals of the organization.

The two "old" goals of fostering professional development and running an efficient organization are joined by two "new" goals. Coordinating and working with other higher education organizations and working to influence national information policy are processes which ACRL wants to develop. He and ACRL encourage the use of legislative networks to accomplish these goals. The relationship of ALA with its Divisions, which Dr. Miller described as "a mother in a mansion in Chicago with eleven grown children who all live at home," is important in the strategic planning of each division.

While mentioning many of the issues and buzzwords of librarianship (change, ownership, access, retooling, controlled and uncontrolled, etc.), he addressed the business of running a library and the economic and social factors which are not being discussed as they should be. Among these economic/social factors is the reality that computer delivered distance education can't really happen until the potential participants have high quality computers and programs and can afford the \$20/month Internet access fee. It costs money to create, store and use information in any format. The added expense of new and rapidly changing technologies does not alter this. Dr. Miller reminded us to combat silly notions like "everything is electronic" and "electronic access is free" and "therefore we don't need libraries." Librarians may become their own worst enemies if they seem to accept, rather than challenge, these myths. He concluded his presentation by commending librarianship as a career choice, both because it remains useful and because it is exciting to work in a profession that most definitely will not be the same when one goes out as it was when one came in.

--*Linda Scarth, Mount Mercy College*

PANEL DISCUSSION: ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING AND LIBRARY PURCHASING

Panel members: Edward Shreeves (Director, Collection and Information Resources, University of Iowa Libraries), Jenni Wilson (Periodicals/Serials Specialist, Blackwell's), William Miller (ACRL President and Director of Libraries, Florida Atlantic University).

Shreeves noted a number of concerns with electronic publishing. Among these were evaluation of the value of networked resources in relation to their cost, the trend among large publishers to offer "all or none" deals for their resources, and the complexity and variety of licensing arrangements. Library users reactions to electronic formats vary from enthusiasm to skepticism, with no obvious consensus. Preservation of electronically delivered resources remains problematic. Finally he noted that rapidity of change, its often incompatible directions, and the consequences of failure make it difficult for large institutions to respond effectively.

Wilson described the traditional model in which the serials vendor adds value to the publication system by negotiating arrangements with individual publishers, packaging collections of serials to the specifications of individual buyers, and simplifying the management of subscriptions for the buyer. Publishers of electronic serials have introduced new models in which they create packages of their own design and deal directly with the purchaser rather than through a vendor. Vendors are now attempting to restore customer-oriented packaging, develop simplified licensing, and to add value in other ways. Vendors have, however, very little influence on pricing, and this will not change with the electronic system.

Miller concurred with the views of other speakers about the legal problems of dealing with complex contracts and noted that having vendors arrange a simplification would be a distinct advantage. He further noted the effects of institutional budget constraints on retention of subscriptions, most particularly in the sciences, and the rise in prices that accompanies a shrinking subscriber base.

The subsequent discussion focused on such issues as the possible causes of the increased volume of publishing and action (including retention of ownership of information by sponsoring institutions) that might be taken to reduce information costs.

Publishers came in for criticism of their pricing practices, notably the "supplemental bills" that make budgeting a nightmare. On the other hand it was noted that publishers carry out many of the critical functions of validating and promulgating information, Publishing is a complex and time-consuming business that cannot survive if it is not profitable. This will not change with a change in physical format.

Considering future trends, it seems likely that there will be an increase in the "sale by the article" model of delivery. Technical problems with Internet speed may be resolved through efforts by commercial users with even greater needs for fast data transmission than libraries have.

--Jeff Dodd, University of Iowa

EXPANDING TECHNOLOGY OUTREACH TO OFF-CAMPUS SITES: A COMMUNITY COLLEGE PERSPECTIVE

Darlas Shockley, Indian Hills Community College

Ms. Shockley described the impact of the Iowa Communications Network (ICN) interactive classrooms on distance-education activities at Indian Hills Community College (IHCC). IHCC has 2300 fte students and serves a ten county area with 140,000 people in south central Iowa. She showed a video on the college, its programming, facilities and staff.

There are now twelve ICN classrooms at sites in the IHCC distance education network, with 14 more under construction. Sites with ICN classrooms have small office/ready reference libraries. Each site has established relationships with public libraries, with the SE Regional Library for interlibrary loan, and with William Penn College.

When completed, each of the distance education centers in the IHCC network will have two ICN classrooms, a conference room, a computer lab with 15-20 machines with Internet access, a library/media ready reference collection, an office/reception room and a mini bookstore.

All new students take a Survival Skills course to help them take advantage of the ICN classrooms, computer facilities, library arrangements, and study skills. The librarians work with instructors on access and delivery of needed materials to support their instruction.

The three ongoing challenges to distance education are access by students, library ability to deliver high quality service, and the need to be proactive in developing delivery mechanisms over the World Wide Web and whatever lies beyond that. IHCC is aware of these challenges and is working to meet them.

--Linda Scarth, Mount Mercy College

NEW AGE OPACS: PROTOTYPES AND POSSIBILITIES

Gerry McKiernan, Iowa State University

The OPAC as currently implemented has significant problems. The first generation OPACS were electronic implementations of card catalogs. The subsequent generation improved on the originals, but still does not make full use of the possibilities.

McKiernan listed a number of desiderata for a modern OPAC. It should be usable at first sight, without the use of help screens. It should integrate wider ranges of information, such as Web URLs. It should have intelligent features that make use of all parts of the bibliographic record. Perhaps evaluative information, like reviews, should be included in the MARC record. Tools useful in searching, such as the LC subject headings, should be integrated into the same search database as bibliographic records.

Currently no OPAC has all these features, but there are a number of attempts. The presentation was illustrated with examples of OPAC projects now underway. Some, like the experimental OPAC at LC, are fully functional. Descriptions of recent projects, including URLs for demonstration versions where available, can be found at the Onion Patch Web site:

<http://www.public.iastate.edu/~CYBERSTACKS/Onion.htm>

--Jeff Dodd, University of Iowa

TOUR OF THE INFORMATION COMMONS, HARDIN LIBRARY FOR THE HEALTH SCIENCES

Jim Duncan, head of Information Commons said the facility, which has been open since August 26, 1996, had 2,460 users in its first five weeks of operation.

Duncan showed how the system could be used by medical students. For example one can "speed up" the growth of a fetal hand, reverse the process, show it again slower - whatever way facilitates learning. Similarly you can label and unlabel displayed anatomical structures at will. To demonstrate image manipulation, Duncan used the system to change the vantage point in an image of the human jaw. He also demonstrated how instructors using the system could combine text and graphics (including 3-D motion video).

During the question and answer session, Duncan was asked what criteria are used for selecting materials. He said that recommendations from the medical staff usually determine the choices. There are not many review or selection aids in this new field of medical electronic education, and this is the best way to guarantee that the items purchased would actually be used. When someone observed that many of the computer carrels just outside the Commons Classroom were empty, he explained that this was intentional because it had been decided to stagger purchases of new computers over three years to counteract obsolescence.

--Peter Hartford, University of Iowa

REPORT ON THE NATIONAL ACRL CONFERENCE

Elizabeth Kaschins of Luther, Betty Rogers of Coe and Bob Rose of UNI all related their experiences at the ACRL Conference held in Nashville, April 11-14, 1997.

Elizabeth Kaschins told us there were over 2,000 librarians and 1,000 vendors there. Probably 25 or so librarians were from Iowa academic libraries, with the division being about equal between the private academic libraries and the universities. She said there were 40 poster sessions in 4 blocks. She enjoyed being at two round table sessions, even though they were oversubscribed. She mentioned that a group from Luther College presented a panel on their College's Lilly Grant For Diversity project that involved faculty, administrators, and support staff from across the campus over a three year period. Norma Hervey, Head Librarian, convened the presentation and three faculty members, from English, Management Information Systems, and Accounting, plus one library support staff member presented. Elizabeth noted that these faculty members were quite impressed with the conference.

Betty Rogers said this was her first really large, national conference and (like most facing a conference with 175 sessions), had some problems deciding which sessions to attend. She liked the poster sessions best of all. One session she regarded as especially noteworthy was Cal Poly's

"Project Renaissance." These posters described the experiment/experience of having 100 incoming freshman live together in the same dorm and take the same classes together.

Another impressive poster session, from Northwestern University was entitled, "A Day in the Life of Reference: a Randomly Selected Timed Survey of Desk Activity." The results showed that traditional reference sources are still heavily used.

The Nashville ACRL Conference was Bob Rose's fourth. He described the five-track program arrangement, and commented that distance education, also referred to as distributive learning, was the most often mentioned theme. Electronic journals were also frequently discussed. Rose generally preferred the panel discussions to the presented paper sessions.

The group in general said that they enjoyed the round-table and poster sessions and concluded by reminding the audience that the next National ACRL Conference will be in Detroit in 1999.

--Peter Hartford, University of Iowa

DEVELOPMENT OF A FOR-CREDIT INFORMATION RETRIEVAL COURSE FOR UNDERGRADUATE BUSINESS STUDENTS

David Martin, Eeva Hoch, Business Library, University of Iowa

Some seven years ago at a session of an ALA conference the senior author heard a discussion of a UCLA program called Conceptual Analysis of Business Information. Several years later the ideas presented at this meeting were employed in developing a 1-hour credit course for MBA students at Iowa. After a lapse of several years a new course was developed at Iowa, this time for undergraduate pre-business and junior business majors, again following the basic UCLA model. The course was first offered last year and will continue during the upcoming academic year. The course is divided into units that complement each other, but are essentially independent. The purpose is to prepare students to carry out searches for basic business information without assistance from trained librarians. This is important especially for those graduates who will be working in environments without in-house library staff.

Each week in the five-week session has a different focus, beginning with basic print information sources and proceeding to more specialized materials in areas such as finance, demographics, economics, and so on. Use of electronic information sources, including those available through the Internet, was integrated with the study of print materials. Evaluation was based on attendance and on successful completion of assigned exercises.

Among students there is a considerable range of sophistication in use of reference sources. Course design was adjusted to take these things into account, and at the end most participants felt they had profited from the instruction. There has been some evidence that participants are now able to pose well-formed advanced questions, as had been hoped. This is by design a small-group course, and its impact on the larger population of Business students will be, for the time, indirect through assistance provided by participants to others who have not taken it.

--Jeff Dodd, University of Iowa

REPORT ON SILO

Marie Harms, State Library of Iowa

Harms, who is a temporary assistant professor at Iowa State University, described the status of the SILO project which, because the state legislature was still in session, was not very definite. She discussed the history and development of the SILO project and staffing arrangements. As the House and the Senate were still compromising on the state budget, she could not speak definitely about SILO's future. She felt most of the activities would continue. The FirstSearch project is continuing with some changes in database availability.

--Linda Scarth, Mount Mercy College

NEWS FROM AROUND THE STATE

Drake University

Karl Schaeffer has been appointed Coordinator, Library Instruction Program at Drake University's Cowles Library. He previously served as a manuscripts cataloger in Princeton University's Firestone Library and as visiting reference librarian at Drake. This summer he will oversee construction of the Library's new electronic classroom.

--Mary Beveridge, Drake University

Mount Mercy College

Kim Faux, whose MLS is from Kent State University, is the new interlibrary loan librarian and evening supervisor at the Busse Center Library. Her duties will also involve reference work. Debra Gofton began her duties as Computer Specialist at Busse Center Library. Debbie, who previously worked at Rockwell, will work with the campus-wide computer network.

--Linda Scarth, Mount Mercy College

University of Iowa Libraries

Carol Hughes has joined the staff of the University of Iowa Libraries as head of Information, Research, and Instructional Services (IRIS). She came to UI from the Research Libraries Group (RLG). Seldon W. Smith has accepted the post of Director of Development for the University Libraries. He comes to Iowa from the University of Pennsylvania Library. We also wish to report the retirements of librarians David Curry (Head, Hardin Library), Peter Hartford (Business Library), Judy Doorenbos (Acquisitions), and Frank Allen (Government Publications).

--Jeff Dodd, University of Iowa

University of Iowa School of Library and Information Science

David A. Eichmann has joined the faculty of the University with a joint appointment as assistant professor in the School of Library and Information Science and the Computer Science Department. Dr. Eichmann comes to Iowa from the University of Houston--Clear Lake. His research interests include design and implementation of intelligent agents for the World Wide Web.

-- Jeff Dodd, University of Iowa

William Penn College

William Penn College's Wilcox Library and the Oskaloosa Public Library have received funding from the local George Daily Family Trust to link their automated catalogs via a WAN. The catalog interface will use the DRA's Web 2 product.

--Jim Knutson, William Penn College

SOME USEFUL ILA/ACRL WEB SITES

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