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Information Outlook, April 2006

Special Libraries Association

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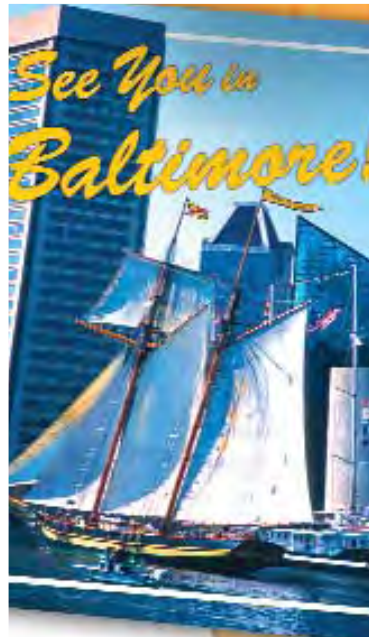
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Going Global



Janice K. Lechner

As we roll into the heart of 2006, SLA is expanding its worldwide presence so that you can continue to build your global network within the community. One such way that may not seem obvious has already occurred. My involvement in the “Tunis Phase” of the World Summit on the Information Society late last year gave SLA unprecedented access to, and involvement in, shaping the future of the Internet for the benefit of our global society. My role on the U.S. delegation was purely consultative, but I was actively involved and my perspective was appreciated by the official representatives of the American government. You can hear more about the Summit through a special presentation of my remarks to the Washington, D.C. Chapter of SLA, which has been recorded and posted to Click University for all SLA members to view without charge. Go to www.clickuniversity.com for more information.

For the first time in SLA history, a majority of newly selected Fellows of SLA are natives of countries other than the United States. Sue Henczel (Australia), Neil Infield (England), and Juanita Richardson (Canada) represent a new wave of leaders in the SLA com-

munity. Add them to the group of amazing individuals who make up the SLA Awards and Honors class of 2006, and we have one of the most diverse groups of honorees in recent memory. Go to www.sla.org/awards to review the list.

Just recently, SLA announced a partnership with the World Computer Exchange (WCE) to facilitate the donation of computer equipment by SLA members, help improve information literacy and advance information access and professionalism in developing nations. In just a few weeks several SLA chapters have already expressed interest in participating with WCE and have offered assistance to those in need. Go to www.sla.org/WCE to find out how you can get involved.

As if all this were not enough for three months out of a year, we have more to share on the globalization front! The 2006 SLA Board of Directors election has yielded the most diverse group of new leaders this association has ever seen:

- President-Elect: **Stephen Abram (Toronto)**, vice president of innovation, SirsiDynix
- Treasurer: **Sylvia James (West Sussex, U.K.)**, principal, Sylvia James Consultancy
- Chapter Cabinet Chair-Elect: **Libby Trudell (Sunnyvale, California)**, senior vice president, Dialog
- Division Cabinet Chair-Elect: **Robyn Frank (Fulton, Maryland)**, Robyn Frank Strategic Partners
- At-Large Director: **Kate Arnold (Hampshire, U.K.)**, head of knowledge management, NHS Direct Online
- At-Large Director: **Tamika Barnes McCollough (Greensboro, North Carolina)**, head of reference and information literacy, North Carolina A&T State University.

Note that three of our new board members are American, one is

Canadian, and two are British. Two of them work in a corporate setting, two are solo consultants, one works in government, and one works in academia. Five of them are women, and the lone male is only the third man to serve as president-elect of SLA in 15 years. All this diversity is something we must celebrate and embrace as a part of the globalization of the SLA community.

As we move forward in 2006, I see numerous ways in which SLA can expand and diversify to be THE global community for information professionals. By establishing greater ties to the information industry and to other associations around the world, and by growing into areas of the world where opportunities are ripe for establishing new chapters, we will succeed.

The best part is that much of our activity can simply be replicated based on successes in existing chapters and divisions of SLA. The partnership with the World Computer Exchange, for example, would not be a reality without the vision of the Washington, D.C. Chapter’s International Relations Committee—and Barbie Keiser, in particular.

Where we go next could literally be up to you. I’d love to hear your ideas, so please e-mail me at janice@sla.org.

web sites worth a click

By Carolyn J. Sosnowski, MLIS

Classical Net

www.classical.net

At least once a year, I start pining for new music. I've played the same favorite CDs for years, and a browse through my collection evokes more than a few "What was I thinking?" moments. This time around, I decided to focus on classical music. Bach's Brandenburg concertos? Been there. Beethoven's symphonies? Done that. Classical Net answers the question of where to start by offering a beginner's guide on exploring the genre, and a "basic repertoire list" of classical pieces, with fundamental works highlighted. The overview of musical periods helps users narrow their focus by time and explore lesser-known composers in eras shared with Mendelssohn or Rossini, for example. The site also features thousands of music and book reviews, plus composer trivia and a multitude of informational and commercial links. The main idea to take away from this site is the importance of listening to learn...and enjoy.

Zillow

www.zillow.com

Searching for a house to buy in the U.S.? You don't have to rely on your real estate agent or dig through public records to determine a home's worth. Zillow's statisticians put various data points together (the exact formula is proprietary, but neighborhood transactions, comparable house features, and facts like square footage are a few of the bits of information that are considered) to produce a Zestimate of a home's value—just plug in an address and go! The site's creators recognize that their results may not be perfect, so valuations can be adjusted based on user information (corrections, additions), which may not be included in public records. The mapping tool plots addresses and uses both satellite imagery and street maps to create a cool visual. Each house record provides information on number of bedrooms, home age, and type of construction, and another click leads you to a list of comparables. Zillow is a powerful start to the daunting task of buying or selling a home.

Astronomy Picture of the Day

<http://antwpr.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/astropix.html>

The cold, dark universe is brought to light and understanding through Astronomy Picture of the Day. I discovered this site more than 10 years ago (in

[continues on Page 8](#)

sla news

Abram Wins SLA President-Elect Seat in First Online Board Election

Stephen Abram, vice president of innovation at SirsiDynix and a leading thinker in the North American library community, has been elected to serve as the association's next president-elect. His term as SLA president will begin in January 2008.

The 2006 election was the first SLA has conducted using an Internet-based voting system. Of the 2,870 members of the association who voted, 93 percent cast their ballots online.

The newly elected board members will be installed at SLA's 97th Annual Conference in Baltimore in June.

Abram, who holds an MLS degree, was president (2004-2005) of the Canadian Library Association, president (2002) of the Ontario Library Association and has served twice on the SLA international board of directors. He also has held leadership positions in the Toronto Chapter, CASLIS, and SLA's Leadership and Management Division.

Abram has been listed by *Library Journal* as a "Mover and Shaker," one of the "key" people influencing the future of libraries and librarianship. He is a recipient of SLA's John Cotton Dana Award and is an SLA Fellow.

He was Canadian Special Librarian of the Year and Alumni of the Year for the Faculty of Information Studies at the University of Toronto. He is an adjunct professor at the University of Toronto, Faculty of Information Studies.

A regular speaker at library and information industry conferences, he also writes the monthly column "Information Tech" in *Information Outlook*.

Others elected to board positions are:



Stephen Abram

'Focus on One Mega-Project to Benefit Us All'

The following is excerpted from Stephen Abram's candidate speech at the SLA Leadership Summit in January.

What would I want to do in my time on the SLA board?

1. Focus. Number One. If we want our profession to achieve something great, then we have to do it with a laser-like focus and dream big. We are a rich, intelligent, diverse and multihued profession and have a valid and supportable interest in just about everything. However, my dream is that we discover the will within us to focus on a single major megaproject that

will benefit us all during my term.

2. Recognition. Libraries radiate throughout the knowledge ecology and make a difference. I'd like more decision makers to notice this! Let's work on getting someone who values us to be a highly visible champion. We need to move beyond ourselves and develop and implement an advocacy program about the role, value and impact of special librarians and information professionals. If we fail at this one thing, we do risk losing everything altogether.

3. Confidence. Let's find the confidence to speak as a profession with authority, confidence, and energy. Let's do this now. Now! Let's not

Treasurer

Sylvia James, principal, Sylvia James Consultancy, West Sussex, U.K., has been working for the last 17 years as an independent management and research consultant. Previously, she worked for 20 years in various positions in research for financial service companies and multinational companies, including eight years as head of research and information at Credit Suisse First Boston, the international investment bank, in London. She lives and works in England.



Sylvia James

Her specialty is business research, particularly researching and analyzing companies and preparing individual research projects for clients. From this experience, she designs training courses on business information, which she presents all over the world. She makes regular contributions to *Business Information Alert*, *Business Information Review*, and *BF Bulletin*.

Chapter Cabinet Chair-Elect

Libby Trudell, senior vice president, Dialog, Sunnyvale, California, heads a global team responsible for programs such as Quantum2, the customer advisory board and outreach to MLIS students. A member of the executive team, she serves as the liaison to SLA and other associations that serve information professionals. In this position, she provides insight on customer needs, and is involved in corporate initiatives such as the knowledge sharing council.



Libby Trudell

Previous management roles at Dialog include marketing, customer services, product development, and strategic planning.

Earlier in her career, she worked in several library consortia, helping members implement services such as OCLC, RLIN, and electronic mail. She authored a report on needs for a regional interlibrary loan system, served on the editorial board for *Library Information Technology Association* journal, and co-authored the book *Options for Electronic Mail*. Her bachelor's in music is from Tufts University and her MLS from Simmons.

Division Cabinet Chair-Elect

Robyn Frank is the principal of Robyn Frank Strategic Partners, a management consulting organization that specializes in assisting professional information managers with library reinventions, performance measurement, benchmarking, library marketing, and change management.



Robyn Frank

She retired from the federal government in September 2005, where she had spent more than 34 years as a career federal librarian.

From 2002 to 2005, as director of library and research services for the Executive Office of the President, she spearheaded a library reinvention effort that resulted in enhanced products and services. Additionally she served on the Federal Executive Board of the Federal Library and Information Center Committee.

From 1998 to 2002, she worked at the Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, where she was involved in the creation of new centralized information resource centers that served CRS analysts. She also conducted a benchmarking study of best practices in special libraries.

Before that, she created and developed specialized information centers on various topical areas, such as food and nutrition, at the National Agricultural Library.

Continues on page 8

study it looonnnnggg and haarr-rddd. Let's not take it literally and study something to death. The death of our profession isn't our goal! We need to have the confidence of our convictions and take action—sustainable action. If every member positioned themselves to each tell just five positive springboard stories in 2006 to five people who matter, our world would change: 50,000 stories will move minds. Imagine if SLA focused on supporting its members even more strongly in our efforts!

4. Balance. Let's balance all of the needs of every type of specialized librarianship. Our differences are small and our common

needs are great. Let's find the middle ground that lets us work more strongly together. We're all in this boat together, and no one part of special librarianship can point to another and say their side of the boat is sinking. Let's sacrifice our pedantic conversations about our titles, our profession's name, how relevant we are. Talking amongst ourselves is just sound and fury.

5. Trust and Respect. We need to respect each other more. We need to build better teams and more sustainable effort. We are a smart profession with strong critical thinking skills. We need to ensure that we don't devolve that critical thinking strength into

random criticism. We need to have faith in our cause. We need to be an incubator of success.

6. Risk. Let's take this risk. Small risk, small reward. Our need is great, we won't get to where we want and need to be without taking some calculated more sizeable risks. As Eugenie Prime hollered at our Seattle conference—NO PUNY VISIONS!

Sometimes you lead, sometimes you follow and sometimes you cheer folks on. That's the role of a leader.

Within SLA I have volunteered for about 25 years. I have led committees for strategic planning, public relations, and com-

mittee on committees and have been a member of many more, including AOOC and Finance. I have led my chapter and a division. I have coordinated five major change-oriented task forces for SLA and chaired the branding task force, and have chaired or been a member of three others.

In each case it was the teamwork that made the day and not the contribution of a single person. I have learned a lot and feel proud of our accomplishments.

I care deeply about sharing and networking. These values must be strong in a leader. As evidence of my commitment to share I point you toward the over

its infancy), and wanted to revisit it. APOD, brought to us by two astronomers, remains simple and informational...and it's really fun to browse through the images of comets, supernovae, and our own nearby planets. Each photograph is annotated with extensive cross-references to archived images and external articles and Web sites. Images may be found through the chronological and subject indexes or through the search tool, and a brief glossary defines commonly used terms.

Roadtrip America

www.roadtripamerica.com

You don't have to be planning a road trip to enjoy this site, which is full of interesting (and sometimes historical) facts, funny signs, and recipes. Get advice about route planning, books and maps for your journey, and staying safe during your travels (courtesy is contagious!). The Roadtrip Forum allows site visitors to share experiences and tips. Travelers may also find deals and make reservations through the site, and take a compatibility quiz to determine if their travel companion will make the trip seem longer than it is in reality. The site founders offer ten lessons for road-trippers, which can also inspire us in our everyday lives.

RecipeSource

www.recipesource.com

It has been a few months since I've included a food-related site in this column. But now that I have a bit more time to cook I went searching for new inspiration. RecipeSource includes over 70,000 (!) recipes, which have been collected since 1993 by the site's creator, her friends, and cooks around the world. The beauty of this site (besides the delicious results in your kitchen) is its simplicity. Users may browse by cuisine or type of dish (stuffed vegetables, rubs, and trifles are a few of the more interesting categories). There is a section that addresses special dietary needs, such as gluten-free foods and recipes for diabetics, and you can even find a list of extra terrestrial and bizarre recipes (Vulcan Carrot Loaf, anyone?). The advanced search tool is fairly flexible, and permits phrase and "not" queries.

Carolyn J. Sosnowski, MLIS, is an information specialist at SLA.

At-Large Directors

Kate Arnold works for the British health service as head of content at National Health Service Direct, a multi-channel service offering health information and advice on the Internet, digital television, and via the telephone.

She is responsible for the development and maintenance of two of the Web site (www.nhs-direct.nhs.uk) and digital TV, NHS Direct Interactive.

Before joining NHS Direct in 2002, she worked for the BBC for 12 years in a variety of information roles. She has also worked as content manager on a government education Web site. She received her MLIS Loughborough University of Technology in 1987.

Tamika Barnes McCollough is head of reference and information literacy at North Carolina A&T State University, Greensboro, where she has been since she began her professional career in 1999. She is also an adjunct faculty member at North Carolina Central University, teaching courses on special libraries and information centers and on science and technology resources and services. She also serves as the faculty advisor for the SLA student group.

She is currently in her second year director of the North Carolina Chapter of SLA.

For more information on the newly elected members of the SLA Board of Directors, see www.sla.org/content/SLA/governance/bodelection/results.cfm.



Kate Arnold



Tamika Barnes McCollough

100 articles I wrote this year including my column for *Information Outlook*. I give over 100 keynote and other speeches a year to library and non-library groups. I have contributed to many books and will publish another in 2006 through ALA editions. I also blog, through Stephen's Lighthouse, and promise to start an SLA President's blog to keep everyone informed and start an interactive discussion with members—not just one way communication, but ongoing conversations. A leader must have strong communication skills and I think I can demonstrate that I bring this competency to SLA.

I believe in a leadership based in collaboration, teamwork, networking, and two-way communication.

We can reach a new plateau. We can prove our value to those we

work with, work for, and get our funds from. We can achieve greatness. By the end of my term I want more employers to know that librarians rock. I don't want anyone to say that they are having trouble finding a position as an information professional. I don't want anyone denying that there is a librarian shortage. I want employers fighting over the best and recruiting. I want employers that closed their libraries to fail (or become quite ill and cure themselves by hiring a librarian—grin). I want employers with great libraries to succeed and blame their librarians. That's how I want us to measure our success.

For the full text of Abram's speech, see: www.sla.org/content/SLA/governance/bodsection/bodcandidates/0506candidates/abramspeech.cfm.

Government Information Division Pros: A Diversity of Roles Second of two parts

By Peggy Garvin and Richard Huffine

The relatively new SLA Government Information Division (DGI) provides connections for information professionals who support government institutions and for those outside the government sector who use local, state, federal, and international government information to support their clients. Since it was established in October 2004, DGI has attracted nearly 200 members from all levels of government, from the private and nonprofit sectors, and from SLA chapters around the globe.

As a way of introducing the new division, we interviewed a handful of our earliest members, asking them about their work and their interests. These members include new and seasoned practitioners whose careers involve reference, research, records management, information technology, information center management, knowledge organization, and—as you will see—much more.

In the February *Information Outlook* we introduced you to Tom Rink. In this article, we present four others.

Olwyn Crutchley, information resource centre manager, Department of Conservation, Wellington, New Zealand

Olwyn Crutchley is one of a strong contingent of international members in the new Government Information Division. She manages the Information Resource Centre (IRC) for New Zealand's Department of Conservation (DOC).

Supporting an agency whose mission she admires is a clear motivator for Crutchley. The Conservation Department works to preserve New Zealand's natural and historic heritage and to stop the decline of New Zealand's indigenous biodiversity. The DOC runs a network of national parks and reserves that comprise about a third of the land mass of New Zealand in what Crutchley describes as "some of the most unspoiled landscapes on the planet." Crutchley says "the staff of DOC has some of the most committed, enthusiastic people you could hope to meet, and visiting our more remote offices



is always an interesting experience."

The IRC provides library and records management services to the department, which has about 2000 staff located in over 100 offices throughout New Zealand, including some on the country's many off-shore islands. Crutchley notes that the integrated library and records team is very common in Australasia, and in New Zealand government agencies in particular. Her team oversees records and document management, which she says is "challenging, as it combines a lot of the knowledge you have from the library world (like cataloguing and classification) and applies it to another discipline (creating metadata structures and functional classification schemas)." She adds, "People in the organization are always amazed that our group finds this stuff interesting, but it is satisfying to create systems and processes that improve people's ability to use and share information—and that is the basis of our training."

Crutchley believes the information technology world has a lot to learn from our profession and, reciprocally, she maintains a keen interest in IT. Her IRC team has accomplished a lot since it was formed six years ago, such as creating digital image and video collections, providing services over the DOC intranet, and creating a single classification scheme for all the DOC's paper records.

Crutchley is a member of SLA's Australia and New Zealand Chapter, established in June 2004.

Bonnie Spiers, outreach and information specialist, Information Services Branch, State Library of North Carolina, Raleigh, North Carolina

Bonnie Spiers serves as an Outreach Librarian with the North Carolina State Library, promoting library services and collections to state agency employees. The

State Library of North Carolina was founded in 1812. Spiers joined the state library just three years ago, after 10 years as an academic reference and electronic resources librarian. She provides reference and research and finds it is especially gratifying when she is "able to help a citizen or a state employee cut through the bureaucracy and find the report they want or connect them with the right person in the right office."

Spiers says the results-oriented research is "a real change from the more general academic reference environment." The Information Services Branch clientele include state employees, genealogists, historical researchers, and data users. The State Library is a depository for state documents and an affiliate of the North Carolina State Data Center. They also have an extensive family and regional history collection.

The state library is beginning to digitize some of its collections. The libraries Access to State Government Information Initiative aims to "develop recommendations and test solutions that support the identification, collection, cataloging, storage, and preservation of state government information and statistical data in all formats, including born digital, for permanent public access" (<http://statelibrary.dcr.state.nc.us/digidocs>). Spiers sees this as a crucial issue, and one that is often overlooked by the state agencies producing the information. "Whenever users call us looking for historical information about state government, I wonder what they will be able find when they start researching the issues of today—50 years from now."

Spiers is a member of the North Carolina Chapter of SLA.

James Staub, government information librarian, Tennessee State Library and Archives, Nashville, Tennessee

James Staub admits he had no interest in high school civics class. He got his civics education later through volunteer work with social justice organizations and nonprofit educational programs. Through this work, he developed a passion for providing permanent public access to government information. At the Tennessee State Library and Archives (TSLA), where he has been working for almost two years, Staub combines his two interests: "govern-

ment information and technology tinkering.” He sees the TSLA collection as a treasure trove of resources—such as its unique 50-year collection of audio recordings of the Tennessee General Assembly—“begging for liberation through digitization.”

Resources that are born digital, or already “liberated,” need to be managed and preserved. “One of the greatest challenges the Tennessee [government documents] depository libraries face,” Staub believes, “is the capture and preservation of electronic state documents.” TSLA transfers state government Web publications to microfilm for preservation, but fugitive documents still get away. The Tennessee depository community is experimenting with distributed capture and preservation of electronic documents. Working with this broader community of documents librarians is rewarding for Staub; as he puts it, “all Tennessee documents librarians rock!”

Staub has been involved in several national-level professional collaboration projects. Along with over 100 other federal depository librarians, he has contributed time to providing virtual reference service through the Government Information Online (GIO) project (<http://govtinfo.org>). The motto of GIO is “our users are on the Web; we should be too.” According to the GIO Web site, the pilot phase of this national project worked to establish a “model for an online cooperative virtual reference and information service that specializes in answering questions about government information.”

Staub’s extracurricular activities include participation in the volunteer Free Government Information (freegovinfo.info) Web community and promoting librarians’ legislative savvy through the Tennessee Library Association’s Legislation Committee.

Staub is a member of SLA’s Southern Appalachian Chapter.

Davenport (“Dav”) Robertson, chief, Library and Information Services Branch, National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, National Institutes of Health, Research Triangle Park, North Carolina

In 1977, the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS)

hired Dav Robertson to serve as the agency’s first professional librarian. He joined SLA that year, and has been with NIEHS and SLA ever since. During his tenure, he has gone from setting up the library and handling most of the library services by himself to “managing a terrific staff.” The library now has five professional librarians and a staff of assistants and interns to support the agency’s 1,350 scientific and administrative employees.

NIEHS is a bit unusual in that the agency has been located in North Carolina—rather than Washington, D.C.—since it was established in 1966. The focus of the agency, and the library’s collection, is toxicology and the relationship between the environment and human health.

Robertson’s big project now is the implementation of a metadata schema for environmental health, which he developed in collaboration with Dr. Jane Greenberg at the University of North Carolina (UNC) School of Information and Library Science. In the project’s current phase, Robertson is “working on building a coalition among federal agencies to develop a vocabulary or taxonomy [for environmental health] using the interoperability standards of the Semantic Web.” (For more on the Semantic Web, see www.w3.org/2001/sw/.)

Having gone from setting up a physical library in 1977 to building a coalition for development of an environmental health vocabulary for the Semantic Web in 2006, Robertson is well positioned to recognize the need for professional growth. “Faced with all of the new technologies that enable people to find information themselves,” he says, “we information professionals have to come up with a new way to define ourselves. People still need us to collect, organize, retrieve, and analyze information—it’s just that the tools, and sometimes the jargon, have changed. We need to retool ourselves and ask what other roles we can play in our organizations as we detach ourselves from a large collection and physical space.”

Robertson began his library career as a UNC intern in a cooperative internship program set up between the Environmental Protection Agency and the School of Information and Library Science. NIEHS joined EPA in the program, and the NIEHS

Library now employs interns on a regular basis. Robertson describes this as a particularly enjoyable part of the job because “it provides us with three bright new faces each year who continue to make us question why we do things a certain way.”

Robertson is an SLA Fellow. At the association level, he has served on the Board of Directors and special groups, in such as the Natural Disasters Task Force. He was chair of the predecessor of the Environment and Resource Management Division in 1982-1983.

Broader Interests

Government information professionals have been active members of SLA since its inception; today, they are leaders in a variety of divisions and chapters. The goal of a special government information division within SLA is to create a forum for members to network around common issues, share experiences, and define Government Information division also sees a strong need within the community of information professionals to connect the managers of government information products with the communities that rely on government information in their daily work. We plan to sponsor specialized programs, such as a roundtable for government information professionals, but also to work with the many complementary divisions to provide programs for the benefit of all SLA members.

Learn more about DGI, and how to join, through the division Web site at www.sla.org/division/dgi. (Special thanks to Karen MacDonald for creating the site and to DGI communications officers Eileen Deegan and Priscilla Lujan.) DGI has also started a blog, available at http://sla-divisions.typepad.com/government_information.

Peggy Garvin is division chair-elect of the Government Information Division and president of Garvin Information Consulting; Richard Huffine is division chair and Web analytics manager of firstgov.gov for the U.S. General Services Administration. Both work with U.S. federal government information in Washington, D.C.



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The Importance of Good Decision Making

By Debbie Schachter

You're new to your management position in a special library and your staff seems to be pleased with your initiatives. In meetings, your library staff seems to be supportive of your ideas for general changes and responses to particular issues. Staff members offer few suggestions or disagreement on the actions that you bring forward, and you have felt secure in proceeding with resolutions, based on your best judgment. Recently, however, a couple of key decisions that you have initiated have led to some significant negative results, unforeseen by you and apparently by your employees, as well. What is going wrong?

This scenario, while somewhat simplistic, is an example of flawed decision making in action, and a problem to which the new manager may be especially prone. With the best of intentions on the part of the library manager and her or his staff, it is clear that the lack of an effective process for decision making will lead to negative results. As the library leader, you need to recognize what is occurring in your library and seek to redress it before major problems arise. As suggested by the volume of management literature on decision making, it is the lack of or poorly understood decision-making process in your library, that leads to problems, and there are some recognized methods for responding to the negative situation.

As the library manager, you understand the expectations of your own superiors—that you are ultimately responsible for the library's direction and the decisions made to reach library goals. This assumption of your responsibility will also be shared by your staff members, but possibly to an extent that they are afraid to speak up in meetings or to share their concerns or suggestions. How you foster your employees' perceptions of their roles in library decision making is based on how or whether you define your expectations for your staff.

As an individual, you may actually dislike it when staff members disagree with you. This type of attitude will inevitably lead to a form of groupthink your employees won't bother to critique issues or suggest resolutions to problems, because they assume you will feel threatened by their outspokenness. Alternately, you may have high expectations of receiving feedback, suggestions, and some level of healthy skepticism of shared ideas, but your staff doesn't rise to meet these expectations. Ultimately, the result is the same—poor decision making—and calls for a serious review and revamping of your library's decision-making process.

To make the best of decisions, you need to encourage the critical thinking and information sharing skills of your staff members; if these skills exist already, you simply need to provide an environment that encourages staff members input. Information needs to be shared and alternative actions analyzed. For the best decisions, that is, those based on the best available information and with the most support from your staff, you need to develop some level of consensus. As Michael A. Roberto of the Harvard Business School states, consensus consists not of being in total agreement as to the solution, but of "a high level of commitment to the chosen course of action and a strong, shared understanding of the rationale for the decision."¹

Creating the Process

Start by examining your own behavior with your staff, with respect to seeking their input and sharing of information with them. Determine whether you feel threatened by opposing views, or do you overtly welcome discussion? In order to lead effectively, you must be open to the healthy discussion of issues and not feel your leadership is in doubt through healthy ques-

tioning of situations and potential resolutions. Next, convey to your staff, particularly the managers and supervisors who report directly to you, what your expectations for decision making will be from now on. A problem or idea should be brought up by one staff member and discussed by the group. Information from other employees should be shared, and alternative views discussed. Especially for complex issues, make sure there are no assumptions that any particular proposal is the "right answer" until all key individuals have participated in the discussion.

Consensus Building

Not every action or solution will meet the expectations of each staff member; however, through using an inclusive discussion and critical thinking model, you will reach your goal of obtaining a consensus on moving forward. Obviously, not every decision needs to take a lot of time to proceed through these steps. A management meeting may offer the opportunity to discuss and move forward with a number of action items; however, major library directional changes and issues that affect on all staff

Debbie Schachter has a master's degree in library science and a master's degree in business administration. She is the associate executive director of the Jewish Family Service Agency in Vancouver, British Columbia, where she is responsible for financial management, human resources, database and IT systems, and grant application management. Schachter has more than 15 years' experience in management and supervision, technology planning and support, in a variety of nonprofit and for-profit settings. She can be reached at dschachter@jfsa.ca.



and users need to move fully through this process.

Remember, consensus is not about everyone agreeing on one idea, but in ensuring that the process to reach a solution is universally understood to be valid. It is support for implementing any action or resolution that is key to its success. You are interested in not only the best possible solution, but also the one that will be most successful in implementation, through communica-

tion and consideration of the impact on all staff members.

Feedback

Periodically review decisions that have been made and discuss with your staff where the successes and failures have occurred. If a new initiative failed, was it because key information was not shared or a particular idea was not considered due to a preconceived solution proposed earlier? Learning from decision making completes the process of

implementing a healthy decision-making process.

Don't let your ego get in the way—your staff will respect you more for soliciting input and for not assuming you know what's right or wrong, and learning what they have to say. Remember, even the best informed decision will not always work out as anticipated, but it will ensure that your staff will work with you to try to make it successful, and will feel that they are participating in the

process. Keep in mind the ultimate goal for every library decision—to ensure best services and programs for your clients, and to make the best use of library resources.

¹ Michael A. Roberto, "Why making the decisions the right way is better than making the right decisions," p. 1. ●



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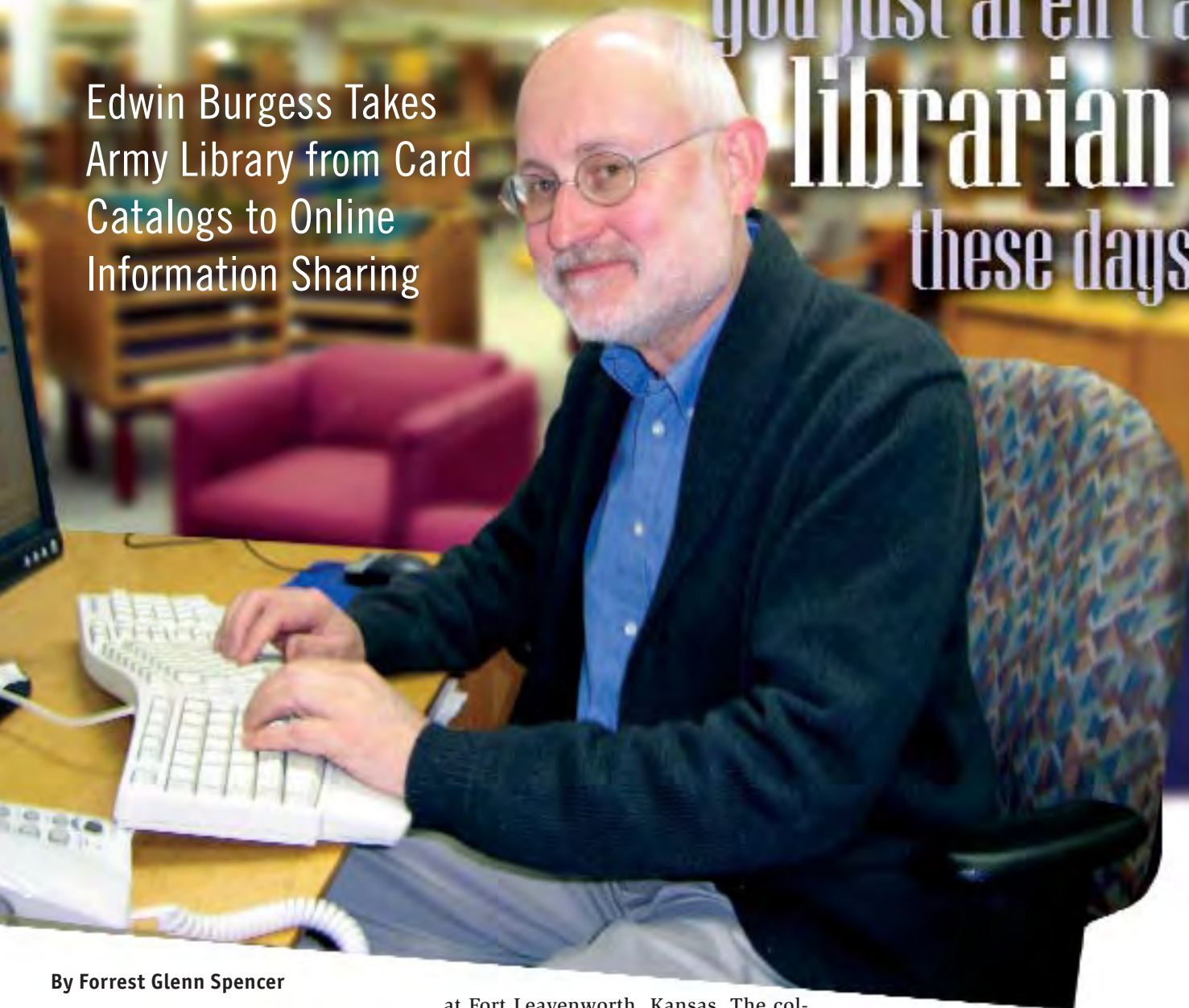
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'If you're not wired... you just aren't a librarian these days'

Edwin Burgess Takes
Army Library from Card
Catalogs to Online
Information Sharing



By Forrest Glenn Spencer

An army may travel on its stomach but it is knowledge and education that will help its commanders fight effectively. A large part of leadership is developed through the combination of classroom lessons and field experience. The U.S. Army understood that when in 1882 it established the Command and General Staff College

at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The college was the brainchild of Civil War General William T. Sherman. It educates intermediate-career officers, individuals who will eventually be placed in high-ranking leadership and staff positions at the brigade, divisional, or corps command level. Some of the famed graduates include Generals Omar Bradley, Dwight

Eisenhower, George Patton, Colin Powell, and Norman Schwarzkopf.

Along with the college, a library was also built in the 1880s so the student officers would have access to the knowledge and wisdom of field commanders current and past, tacticians and historians, books and monographs, doctoral theses, maps, and

SLA Member Profile

photographs. The college's library is known today as the U.S. Army Combined Arms Research Library (CARL). Located inside Eisenhower Hall, the CARL is a modern and comprehensive military science research center. Its director these last five years has been SLA member Edwin B. Burgess.

"I have a collection of 300,000 books and about that many in documents," Burgess said in a recent interview. "We have a secure classified area that we maintain. I've got an extensive digitization program. We do the stuff that normal libraries do—like answer reference questions, maintain the Web page and digital library, catalog, circulation—that sort of thing." Among the military databases, the CARL's Web site includes Lancaster Index, Jane's Online Research, EBSCO Academic Search Premier, and Political Risk Yearbook. For the academic, there are LexisNexis Congressional Universe, Peterson's Online Resource Center, and CIAO (Columbia International Affairs Online).

Burgess's staff are all civilians—38 in all, including the part-timers. The students at the college are mostly military officers in the middle period of their careers—around 15 years of service, with the rank of major, typically. About 10 percent to 15 percent of the class is made up of officers from other U.S. The college also admits officers from other countries.

All the students understand they may be faced with a number of missions, from full-scale war to counterinsurgency, peacekeeping, and disaster relief. The library's duty is to make available a complete range of materials reflecting these missions.

Focus on the Soldier

"In this library, and all libraries in the Army, the focus is always the soldier," Burgess said. "Everything we do exists to help the soldier be better at what they do. We have a dual mission. We are the college's academic library, and we are the Army's equivalent of a public library for the installation. In the post libraries—lots of soldiers are getting educations, and

we would be supporting GEDs, college degrees, supporting family members who are going to grade school, high school, or studying on their own; lots of recreational use, of course. When you're at a base with lots of troops—some of the soldiers would just come in to find a quiet place to rest—away from their sergeant."

Primarily, Burgess's job ensures that the library supports the college, which is a graduate-level institution offering its own degree and supporting a number of people who are taking PhDs from civilian colleges.

"In this particular school we're mainly dealing with officers who are looking forward in working in high command levels," he added. "We do a lot of leadership, military history, tactics, and so forth. The curriculum has changed somewhat to reflect the current environment. We are doing some counterinsurgency, national security and nation-building, a good deal of interagency work: Like how does the soldier who has been deployed conduct himself with the hundreds of nongovernmental agencies that appear in a distressed area or how does he work with the State Department, the CIA, or the British Army or host-country army."

Burgess is proud of his work for the professional soldier. He has been a special librarian connected with the U.S. Army for more than 30 years, and yet he has never served in the armed forces. "When I got out of library school in 1971 there was a protracted period of unemployment during which I sent out numerous résumés, none of which had any effect," Burgess recalled. "I didn't have a lot to offer in terms of experience, except a freshly minted master's degree.

"One of my relatives, as it turned out, was an officer in the Army and stationed at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, and heard about a vacancy there. So I applied and got the job: Drudge Second Class, I say jokingly, a professional librarian but at the bottom of the totem pole."

Burgess has been an employee with the DoD on various posts. In the



SLA Member Profile Edwin B. Burgess

Joined SLA: 1993

Job: Director, U.S. Army Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Employer: U.S. Department of Defense, United States Army

Experience: 34 years

Education: Macalester College, St. Paul, University of Minnesota, MLS

First LIS job: Working for the family business, the Burgess Lumber Yard in Amarillo, Texas. "Several summers of manual labor in the Texas sun convinced me that I wanted to go to college, which was probably my father's intent."

Biggest Challenge: "Learning how to talk to higher management in terms that they can understand and deal with. Took me years to do that effectively, and it's a critical skill."

early 1980's he made the transition into special librarianship when he was with the USA Concepts Analysis Agency in Bethesda, Maryland, a technical library specializing in strategy, and then as the systems librarian at Fort Monroe, Virginia, overseeing the acquisition and testing of automated systems for 44 libraries connected with the Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC).

Burgess was at this post for 13 years, and it was certainly the core of his development in management as a special librarian, which led to his current post at Fort Leavenworth. His job during that time at TRADOC involved coordination with vendors, installing an online ordering and accounting system, and integration of the library systems. TRADOC is the "architect of the Army," an institution that builds a foundation for the soldier, designing and delivering training to soldiers at all levels and developing doctrine: the rules and methods by which the army operates. It oversees a huge training program at 33 schools and 16 U.S. Army bases.

In 1995, Burgess transferred to Fort Leavenworth as chief of public services, supervising reference services for publicly available materials in the collection and responsible for digitizing the CARL's materials. It's not surprising that as the Army and the other services have adapted to the changing global environment that the special library services of Burgess's world have had to change and adapt.

"My feeling is that I've had the privilege to work in a really interesting time in the profession," said Burgess. "Libraries have changed more in the last 40 years than they have in the previous thousand. When you look at pre-1950 innovations—what is there: gee, we started typing catalog cards! Big deal. Now, no one knows what the heck a catalog card



is and nobody misses them. It's all computers today, it's all networked, and we are steadily growing through Web interconnections. We're a long way from perfecting that, if it can be perfected, but that's what we have."

The Old 286

Burgess recalled some 20 years ago when he went out and bought four Zenith PCs for each TRADOC library, shipped them across the country, and performed installation and training. Those were 286-computers with 20 MB hard drives. "Today we routinely create documents that are more than 20 megs," Burgess added with a laugh. "Or, 10 years ago, the CARL effectively served only those who came in, or those who were physically nearby. Now, we routinely field requests from soldiers deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan. E-mail and vir-

tual reference have enabled us to actively assist people working in those theaters. We're part of a QuestionPoint reference consortium and handle questions every day from overseas. That's been another big change in the profession."

Computer technology introduced in the library system also brought about a further change with the librarians, especially in the special librarianship of Burgess and his associates, a change that may not be necessarily generational since it requires acceptance and willingness to adapt.

"At the time when computers were entering the system it revolutionized the library business," Burgess said. "We found that the older librarians who had been around for a while weren't really interested



Forrest Glenn Spencer is a Virginia-based independent development researcher and freelance writer. He specializes in developing potential donor prospects for non-profit organizations, such as America's Promise—The Alliance for Youth, the National Coalition for Cancer Survivorship, and the American Red Cross. He was a 14-year broadcast news associate and has written for numerous print and Internet publications for the last several years. He can be reached at fspencer@chemsoft.net.

in handling the new technology and that was a big problem for them. They had trouble getting their minds around the whole concept of online services and e-mail. The people who didn't like that kind of change are gone from the system. You cannot be a librarian unless you're well wired. If you're not wired—I don't care if you've got a degree or not—you just aren't a librarian these days. It's a matter of keeping up with the technology as it evolves."

Equally important is the customer service aspect of the profession. This is one piece of advice Burgess stresses to LIS students. "We've all known people who think they can get into the librarian profession and not deal with people and that's a mistake," Burgess said. "The technology is incredibly important but it's only there so you can communicate what you know and people need to know."

Think Like the Managers

And as to what the special librarian can do to excel in the profession: "Always think like the managers—not your boss but their bosses. What do they want? If you're in a company, it's not going to help you to be perceived as a cost. You need to be perceived as a resource that generates something. I think that's true in the public sector as in the private sector. If you're overhead, you're something to be cut. If you're a valuable resource that makes everybody's life easier, then you're something to be enhanced. You have to think about it in those terms. Everybody does not automatically see you're worthwhile. You have to show them you are worthwhile."

Adaptability has been a large factor in Ed Burgess's life. When he assumed the directorship of the CARL, it was two months after 9/11. The emphasis to the students utilizing the contents of his library would alter radically from major combat operations to countering terrorism. "That has had an effect," Burgess said. "There was a time when the focus was on fighting the Russians if

they invaded Germany. We no longer consider that a major threat. So I don't collect a lot of books on large unit tactics any more.

"We still do military history but today we're looking at more books about the Islamic fundamentalist threat, their culture, counter-insurgency tactics—that's a much bigger section than it used to be. We still teach, to a degree, traditional large battle combat tactics, because our soldiers may have to do that at some point. It's better to be good at it than not. Clearly, right now, the effort is Iraq and Afghanistan—so that kind of war is getting the attention."

Burgess, who has been with SLA since 1993, is an active member of the Heart of America Chapter and the Military Librarians Division. He is a past president of Heart of America and currently serves as archivist for the chapter and the Military Librarians Division.

Burgess enjoys his time with his fellow SLA members. "Heart of America is Kansas City-centric," Burgess said. "We have a good association with the library school in Emporia, which is 150 miles away. We go places and enjoy instructional programs, the usual SLA activities. The most successful thing we did when I was president was a program on copyrights in the electronic age, for which I booked a Kansas professor and held at a university student union and probably got 100 people to come. Most of them were nonmembers; it was a good fundraiser for us."

With the SLA Military Librarian Division, Burgess usually attends its annual workshops in December, as well as its programs at the SLA annual conference. And away from SLA and the CARL, he is married to Ann Burgess, a self-employed craft maker. She's currently involved with hand-marbled fabric that she prints herself, and she produces a variety of decorative objects. They've been married since 1970.

Burgess doesn't know when his tour of duty will end. Under the civil service rules he is eligible to retire, yet he has no intention of leaving.

With his directorship at the Combined Arms Research Library he is enjoying his work and the relationship with his military supervisors. "They are extremely supportive," he said. "I would like to feel that I have impressed the value of the library on them. I am certainly getting my share of the resources and a certain amount of recognition."

Burgess knows that the present financial support will not continue in the long term. "Part of the budget support is because the nation is spending a tremendous amount of money on its military right now. I don't think that will continue indefinitely. When the inevitable period of budgetary contraction comes, that will be our test." 🌐



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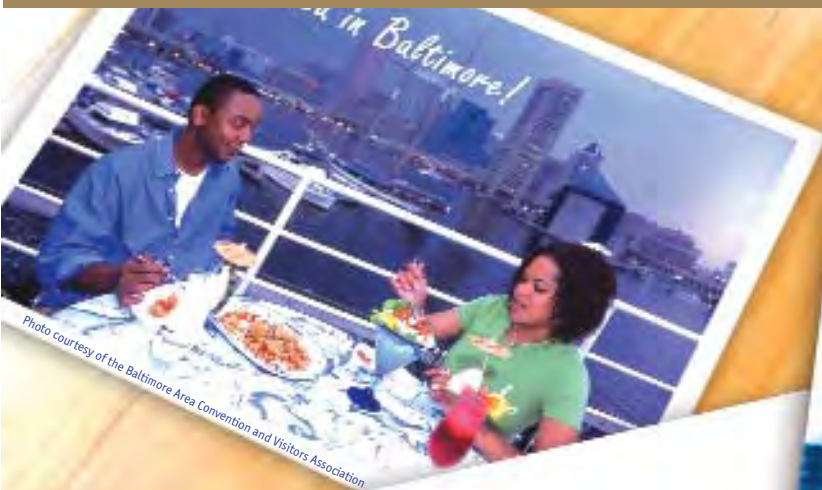
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It's Time
to Get Ready
for The Big Show!

By Edna W. Paulson and Mary Woodfill

Baltimore is a unique American city. It has vibrant neighborhoods, an industrial past, a varied population, delectable food, and an important place in American history. Its attractions are so great, some people call it Charm City. You'll call it a great place for a Special Library Association convention. The Maryland Chapter of SLA is delighted that the convention is coming to Baltimore June 11-14, and we want to share some things about the area that we hope will encourage you to come and enjoy your time here.

The Baltimore Convention Center, site of the convention, is located in the heart of downtown Baltimore. Many restaurants, historic sites, museums, and other attractions are within easy reach by foot or nearby public transportation.

The public transportation system in Baltimore includes buses, a subway, and a light rail (aboveground) system. The

Maryland Transit Administration's Web site has schedules and maps you can consult or print out to help in your advance planning (www.mtmaryland.com).

History

Baltimore has been important in the history of the United States almost since the first European settlers arrived in Maryland on the *Ark and the Dove* in 1634. Many sites in the city are important in that history. This article can only hint at Baltimore's people and events that have influenced history.

Settlers were attracted early to the Inner Harbor area, with its sheltered anchorage fed by rivers and its easy access to the Chesapeake Bay. In the early 1700s, there were tobacco warehouses in the area now known as Fells Point. By the 1750s, Baltimore was a center of shipping to the West Indies, with cargoes including iron, tobacco, wooden products, flour from Baltimore-area mills, and other staple foodstuffs. The area includ-

ed people from England, Ireland, Scotland, Germany, and Africa, and French speakers deported from Canada.

Baltimoreans were enthusiastic supporters of the American Revolution. They built ships for the new U.S. Navy and designed fast clippers for privateers (private ships that raided enemy shipping). Many Baltimore natives served with distinction in battles from Long Island to South Carolina.

By 1790 Baltimore's population had reached 13,000. By 1810 it had grown to 45,000. The city was a major port for exports from the growing settlements to the west, and became an industrial center as well. The Shot Tower at 801 E. Fayette Street was built in 1828. Its 234-foot height allowed molten lead to form uniform pellets as it fell, producing ammunition of high quality. In the same year, the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad was founded to facilitate trade with the West.

Renewed hostilities with Britain in the War of 1812 produced one of Baltimore's best-known contributions to American history, the national anthem. Author Francis Scott Key wrote "The Star-Spangled Banner" after seeing the American flag still flying over Fort McHenry after bombardment by the British, a sign that the British attack had failed. The fort is named for James McHenry, a Baltimore resident who was secretary of war in the late 1790s. It is now a National Historic Site. Arrangements can be made at the gift shop for a flag purchased there to be flown over the fort (www.nps.gov/fomc/home.htm).

The Star-Spangled Banner Flag House at 844 East Pratt Street was the home of Mary Young Pickersgill and her mother, who created the flag that inspired Key. The original flag is now housed in the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., where it is being restored. The Flag House has a glass replica made in France (www.flaghouse.org).

In the years before the Civil War, the divisions of the country were mirrored in Baltimore. Maryland was a slaveholding state, but Baltimore had the largest population of free black people in the U.S., and Maryland did not join the Confederacy. As the war broke out, Southern sympathizers in Baltimore fired on U.S. troops moving through the city to South Carolina. Baltimore was occupied by Union troops for much of the war, since the city's status as a hub of trade and communication made it vital to Washington, D.C. After the war, Baltimore banks contributed heavily to the rebuilding of the economy

and infrastructure of the Southern states, and many freed slaves came there to find a better life.

By 1870, Baltimore's population was more than twice Washington's. Steamboats were replacing the sailing ships, and industry was growing. Canning of vegetables and oysters joined other industries as the city thrived. This prosperity was expressed in works of philanthropy. The Peabody Institute, Johns Hopkins University and its hospital, the Walters Art Museum, and the Enoch Pratt Free Library were all founded during the late 1800s by Baltimore businessmen. (See the sidebar for more about these institutions.) When a fire destroyed much of the original downtown area in 1904, the area was rebuilt and the layout of streets improved. Two buildings that escaped the fire are located at Charles and Lexington Streets: the Fidelity Building (1894) and the Central Savings Bank Building (1890).

Baltimore continued to prosper and grow as an industrial center and shipping hub. When America entered World War I, Baltimore shipbuilders built military vessels. Industrial growth boomed during World War II, especially shipbuilding and aircraft and munitions manufacture.

In an exodus that occurred in many American cities, industry and people alike left Baltimore for the suburbs after World War II. Some local industries were bought by out-of-state companies, and stores closed. The area near the Inner Harbor was marred by abandoned buildings and unattractive streets. Baltimoreans responded to this challenge with projects that revitalized the core of the city. Charles Center, a business area that includes shops and restaurants, brought new life to 33 acres to the west of Charles Street, several blocks north of the Convention Center.

Public and private interests combined to fund new development such as the Maryland Science Center, new hotels, and office



Top Five Downtown Baltimore Attractions

1 The Inner Harbor, just east of the Convention Center, is a great place for history, fun, nature, shopping, dining (including Maryland's famed steamed crabs), and people watching. Harborplace is two pavilions of shops and restaurants next to the water. The area between them is a popular site for street musicians and entertainers (www.harborplace.com). The observation level of the World Trade Center, just to the east of Harborplace, has great views in all directions. Other attractions around the

Inner Harbor include the Maryland Science Center, the American Visionary Art Museum, the Baltimore Public Works Museum, and others.

2 The National Aquarium in Baltimore occupies an eye-catching building on the Inner Harbor, easily recognizable by its pyramidal top and neon waves. The aquarium was largely funded by the City of Baltimore and private sources and was designated a "national" aquarium by Congress. Popular exhibits include an Atlantic

coral reef and large sharks. Another current exhibit, Animal Planet Australia: Wild Extremes! includes flying foxes and lizards (www.aqua.org).

3 The Mount Vernon Place area is the site of one of the first memorials to George Washington, planned in 1809. The simple column rests on a base housing a museum. Inscriptions on the base trace Washington's career. When the monument was built in 1815, it was about a mile north of the city. Just south of the monument is the Walters Art Museum, which features "55 centuries of

buildings. In 1980, the two pavilions of shops and restaurants known as Harborplace opened (see sidebar). More redevelopment followed, including a new baseball stadium for the Baltimore Orioles (who unfortunately will be playing away during the conference), and a football stadium for the Baltimore Ravens, successors to the Colts, who had fled to Indianapolis.

Famous Residents

Baltimore has also been the home of many important figures in American culture. We can mention only a few. Perhaps the most romantic figure is Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), who lived at 203 N. Amity Street from 1832 to 1835 with several other family members. He died in Baltimore on October 7, 1849, after being found in a gutter. He was buried in a churchyard at Fayette and Greene Streets. Every year since 1849, an unknown person has left an offering on his grave on the anniversary of his death: three roses and part of a bottle of cognac (www.eapoe.org).

Baltimore native H.L. Mencken (1880-1956) was a newspaperman and critic who lived most of his life at 1524 Hollins Street. Mencken was widely known as an iconoclastic social critic and as the author of *The American Language*. His three volumes of autobiography provide pictures of life in Baltimore (*Happy Days*, *Newspaper Days*, and *Heathen Days*). The house is no longer open to the public (www.menckenhous.org).

Ragtime pianist and composer Eubie Blake was born in Baltimore in 1883 and lived to be over 100. The Eubie Blake National Museum and Cultural Center at 847 N. Howard Street sponsors classes, performances, and an art gallery (www.eubieblake.org).

Film director-screenwriter-producer Barry Levinson is a Baltimore native. Four of his films have been set there, and two (*Diner* (1982) and *Avalon* (1989)) were nominated for Academy Awards for best screenplay. He was also executive producer and

art." Special exhibits on view during the conference will include Byzantine art, drawings of the Ashcan School, and the reinstallation of the European Old Master collections in new galleries. The permanent collections cover a remarkable variety of periods and styles of art (www.thewalters.org).

Nearby is the Peabody Institute of Johns Hopkins University, founded in 1866. The Institute includes the nation's oldest conservatory of music and houses the George Peabody Library and the Arthur Friedheim Music Library, both open to the public (www.peabody.jhu.edu).

For More on Baltimore

Looking for more on Baltimore? Try the following resources:

- 1** The Maryland Chapter web site has tips on sights, restaurants, bookstores, and more coming in late March (<http://www.sla.org/chapter/cmd/balt06.htm>). The site also links to other resources on the city.
- 2** The Maryland Chapter blog is a place to post your questions about Baltimore or the conference and look for answers and tips (sla-maryland.blogspot.com).
- 3** The Special Libraries Association conference page links to many helpful sites (www.sla.org/content/Events/conference/ac2006/index.cfm).
- 4** Once you are in Baltimore, visit the hospitality booth in the registration area for local information, tips, and a chance to win a welcome basket of Maryland treats. Information from the chapter Web site will be available as a printed guide.

directed many episodes of the television series *Homicide: Life on the Street* (1993-1999), also set in Baltimore. Levinson attended Baltimore City Community College.

John Waters, another Baltimore native, has set all his films in the city. These range from cult films like *Pink Flamingos* (1972) to his mainstream comedy, *Hairspray* (1988), which has become a hit musical.

Baseball legend Babe Ruth (1895-1948) was born in Baltimore. He played for the minor league Orioles before going on to the Boston Red Sox and New York Yankees. His birthplace at 216 Emory Street is now a museum. The Sports Legends at Camden Yards Museum near Oriole Park (301 W. Camden Street) also includes a tribute to the Babe, as well as exhibits honoring other baseball greats (www.baberuthmuseum.com).

(www.baberuthmuseum.com).

The sidebars suggest some additional resources, including the Maryland Chapter Web site, where you will find suggestions, including bookstores and restaurants and top attractions near the Convention Center.

The chapter also hosts a blog where you can post questions. And once you are at the convention, please stop by the hospitality booth to meet some local chapter members. Besides information about getting around and seeing the sights, you'll have a chance to win a gift basket of Maryland treats. We look forward to greeting you in Baltimore!

Edna W. Paulson is employed as principal information specialist for Chugach Industries, Inc., at the NASA Center for Aerospace Information near Baltimore. She can be reached at epaulson@sti.nasa.gov.

Mary Woodfill Park is President of the Information Consultancy (www.informationconsultancy.com) in Baltimore. She specializes in Family and Corporate Historical Research and Genealogy. She can be reached at mwpark@informationconsultancy.com. ●

4 Baltimoreans have been buying food at the Lexington Market for more than 200 years. Many of the stalls have been operated by the same family for generations. The market's two buildings stretch two blocks from Greene Street to Eutaw Street north of Lexington Street. You can buy just lunch, or the ingredients for a feast. The seafood stalls are an education in marine life and a great place to sample the city's famed crab cakes. Unfortunately for the adventurous, muskrat will not be in season in June (www.lexingtonmarket.com).

5 The Enoch Pratt Free Library is the public library of Baltimore, with over 20 branches, as well as the State Library Resource Center for Maryland. The central library on Cathedral Street houses the papers of Baltimore newspaperman and writer H. L. Mencken, as well as portraits of historical figures. The current building dates from 1933 and has a two-story reading room (www.pratt.lib.md.us).

See locations of these sites on the Wayfarer Map at www.wayfaring.com/maps/show/874 or any map of Baltimore.

Plenty of Learning Opportunities Scheduled for SLA 2006

Okay, Baltimore is a great city. It's historic, vibrant, cosmopolitan. It has sports teams, tourist attractions, museums, professional theaters, a zoo, art galleries, major universities—even historic library. There are enough things to do there you could stay a week and not even finish up with the downtown area.

But when the SLA Annual Conference arrives in Baltimore during the second week of June, there will be plenty of educational opportunities for information professionals. And that, the charms of Charm City notwithstanding, is why you're going.

In addition to keynotes by PBS editor and correspondent Gwen Ifill and *Wall Street Journal* Personal Technology columnist Walt Mossberg, there will be several days of seminars and workshops and one of the world's largest exhibitions of products and services for information professionals.

A detailed preliminary conference program was packaged with the February issue of *Information Outlook*. There's more information—including an interactive personal conference planner—online at www.sla.org/content/events/conference/ac2006/index.cfm.

If your appetite for professional development still needs whetting, here

are a few highlights.

While the conference “officially” begins on June 11, you can register on-site as early as June 9. Ticketed full- and half-day seminars—presented by the SLA Professional Development Center and various SLA divisions—begin Saturday, June 10.

Topics range from blogging to leadership to stress management. There are seminars on information architecture, taxonomies, and cataloging.

You can cap off the day with an evening bus tour of Baltimore. It will take you from historic Fells Point to Federal Hill, the best spot in town to see the city skyline and the Inner Harbor.

Ticketed sessions continue on Sunday, June 11. Late morning sees the ribbon-cutting for the INFO-EXPO Hall and an exhibit reception that leads up to the first general session and the official opening of the conference.

If you get up early Monday morning, there are workshops beginning at 7:30 a.m. Monday sessions continue in three more time blocks through the day, with more scheduled Tuesday and Wednesday.

Collaboration tools, knowledge management, managing content, RSS feeds, business intelligence, ter-

rorism, Web searching—these are just a few of the topics the workshops cover.

Overall, you can choose from more than 200 educational sessions. In between are exhibit hall hours, unit meetings, roundtables and, of course, a full menu of hospitality suites and open houses at the end of each day.

Register by May 1 and you'll save with the early-bird rate. You can do it all online at <http://registration.expexchange.com/ShowSLA061>. ●



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Juggling Career and Family, Baltimore Style

Or the Saga of How a
Session Made It into the
Conference Program



By Elana Broch, PhD, MLIS

You may remember me. I wrote an *Information Outlook* article last year titled “How to Have a Great Time in Toronto” (you can find it online at <http://www.sla.org/pubs/serial/io/2005/apr05/toc.htm>). Yep, the article with the photo of the unshaven man. No, I didn’t pick that. And I have to say that I was unhappy with that photo. Very unhappy. So unhappy that I vowed never to write for *Information Outlook* again. So much for that. As the saying goes, “When life

hands you lemons, make lemonade.”

[Editor’s note to graphic artist: Please don’t use any pictures of unshaven people with this article.]

Yes, I’m the one who doesn’t like to travel. That was how I began last year’s article. And I did make the trip to Toronto and I did have a “great time.” Did I mention the fact that I took my entire family with me?

It seemed to make sense at first. I thought my children (ages 6 and 9 at the time) would enjoy being in another country. We were heading to northern New

York state for a family vacation, so Canada didn’t seem that far out of the way. Obviously, none of this would have been possible if my wonderful husband, who does like to travel, hadn’t agreed to come along so I could attend sessions (I was presenting on Tuesday) and the Social Science Division (DSOC) board meetings. I was particularly intent on attending the DSOC planning meeting because I wanted to propose a session for Baltimore 2006 on “juggling work and family.”

*Elana Broch is a population research librarian at Princeton University. She earned a PhD in psychometric methods, before earning her MLIS. She can be reached at ebroch@princeton.edu. In addition to organizing “Juggling Work and Family” in Baltimore, she is presenting two sessions on statistics (“Taking the Sting Out of Statistics: Basic Concepts” and “Does She or Doesn’t She? Only Her Statistician Knows for Sure”). For the record, her children watched the movie *Robots* and she neglected making dinner so she could finish writing this article.*



Juggling work and family: My interest in a session on this topic was spawned at the SLA Annual meeting in 2004, the result of two encounters I had in Nashville. (If you read my article in last year's *Information Outlook* you may remember that to me the whole point of going to conferences is to network.)

You probably don't remember that Nashville was my first SLA meeting. I met Karen Shaines, a DSOC member, early in my stay. We hit it off immediately. We started discussing the lists we left for our husbands so they would remember which kid got which snack and who had gym on which day. In the course of our conversation, Karen mentioned a great video she had seen with some of her neighbors, *Juggling Work and Family* with Hedrick Smith.

We talked about how much fun it would be to do a session based on the video at an SLA meeting. You know, bringing together other people who were dealing with the same things we were dealing with, regardless of which SLA division they were part of. One glitch was that Karen already knew she wouldn't be in Toronto, because her son would be graduating from high school the week of SLA in June 2005 (what are mothers, if not planners?).

The Idea Grows

So the seed was planted on my first day in Opryland. It germinated the next morning. I was up at 6 a.m. (remember I'm the mother of young children and was in a different time zone) frantically searching for coffee when I met another SLA conferee (also an Easterner and the mother of a young child). Emily Poworoznek and I struck up a conversation and really hit it off. In the course of talking about family and career (and as mothers, talk of career quickly switched to talk of children), I mentioned the video that Karen had told me about. Emily thought it sounded like a great video and she agreed to broach the idea of a "juggling work and family" session with her division (Physics, Astronomy, and Math). We kept in touch after Nashville, got together in Toronto, and now we're organizing this session together.

Fast-forward to spring 2005. Before leaving for Toronto, I contacted Pauline Steinhorn, the producer of the video that

Karen had spoken so highly of. She was very willing to come to Baltimore and share her video with us. I also touched base with Karen and Emily, who were still interested in making it happen.

I was all set to bring my idea to the Social Science Division. As I mentioned in my last article, they are a wonderful, embracing, supportive division, and I hoped they would be excited about the idea. Since I am now chair of the Public Policy Section within Social Science, juggling work and family certainly seemed like something that could be within the purview of DSOC.

Then came the glitch. My husband was going to have to be in New York on the day of the planning session. Was I really crazy enough to bring my children with me to the meeting? Is there anything that can entertain a 6-year-old boy quietly for 90 minutes, if you're philosophically opposed to owning a Game Boy?

I thought my session "Taking the Sting out of Statistics" had gone really well, in spite of the fact that I had completely (and I mean completely) lost my voice. I decided to chance the DSOC planning session. I figured that if things didn't work, I could always leave.

It worked! My children behaved beautifully (believe me, it doesn't happen often). Linda Richer, the president of DSOC, asked everyone to give a round of applause to the "guests." In retrospect, did I give the session my undivided attention? No. Did I worry that the calm would be shattered at any moment by an urgent bathroom request or a missing Lego piece? Yes. But most important,



Pauline Steinhorn

"Juggling" got the green light.

Back in New Jersey, I contacted Pauline, Karen, and Emily to say we'd gotten the go ahead. In the spirit of "Juggling," I made calls only after work, on my cell phone, preferably while attending my children's swim practices.

Have I mentioned the wine and cheese? I really wanted the session to include a wine and cheese reception. I loved the idea of having the session be serious but fun. It's expensive enough to have a large room at the conference hotel, not to mention a DVD player. Although Terry Hill, our conference planner, never blinked when I mentioned wine and cheese, I knew I needed a sponsor to make this work. As I walked through the exhibits in Toronto I talked to someone I knew at CSA, who gave me the number of the person to contact if I wanted to pursue using CSA as a sponsor.

It worked. I called Jill Blaemers, the director of social science content for CSA (on a cell phone, while my children were at swim team practice) and she was very interested in "Juggling." Long story short, CSA agreed to sponsor the session. Jill even found a co-sponsor, Proquest.

Have I gotten you interested? I think it will be a great session. So bring your friends. Bring your family (if you're crazy enough to bring them to conferences with you). Let's have fun and enjoy the fact that many of us are having to deal with what seems like the never ending stress of juggling two important arenas.

As a side venture, I'd like to compile a selection of "honey-do lists." If you'd like to send me (ebroch@princeton.edu) or bring a copy of a list you leave for your caregiver when you travel, we'd like to put a sample of them on the DSOC Web site. First prize—for the most detailed list—is a copy of *Keeping the Baby Alive till Your Wife Gets Home* by Walter Roark.

And if you'd like to e-mail (or bring) your favorite 30-minute dinner recipe to share, we can post those on the DSOC Web site, too.

Will I be bringing my family this year? I honestly don't know. But if you see two very short people at this session, don't believe them when they say they're old enough to drink. ●



"Juggling Work and Family" is scheduled for 5 to 7 p.m., Tuesday, June 13.

Participants will view the PBS documentary *Juggling Work and Family* with Hedrick Smith, then join a discussion led by its producer, Pauline Steinhorn.

Always Fresh



Keeping Your Web Site Current with News Feeds

By Darlene Fichter

Many information professionals have discovered the value of using news aggregators to subscribe to news feeds with updated content from blogs, newspapers, journals and other Web sites. RSS newsreaders are a real time saver for anyone who has to keep up on a dozen or more sites per day.

Dave Winer posted this comment on his Really Simple Syndication Blog about RSS: "When people ask me what RSS is, I say it's automated Web surfing. We took something lots of people do, visiting sites looking for new stuff, and automated it. It's a very predictable thing, that's what computers do—automate repetitive things." (See www.reallysimplesyndication.com/2005/09/11#a951.)

But RSS feeds aren't just useful for keeping up to date professionally. News feeds are the raw materials that we can use to make our library sites timelier and more inter-

esting for our visitors. Savvy information pros are capitalizing on all of this information in an RSS format to create new content on their Web sites.

If you have ever clicked on an RSS feed and displayed it in your browser, it's not exactly pretty to look at it. RSS in its natural state is meant for computers to process, not for people to read. It's ideally suited to being sliced and diced and republished. RSS is like fresh produce just waiting for you to create some sort of wonderful culinary feast for your library customers.

Obviously some kind of magic or transformation has

Always Fresh:

ite Current
eds



2 p.m. ET
Wednesday,
May 17

Instructor: **varlene Fichter**

Details and registration information are at

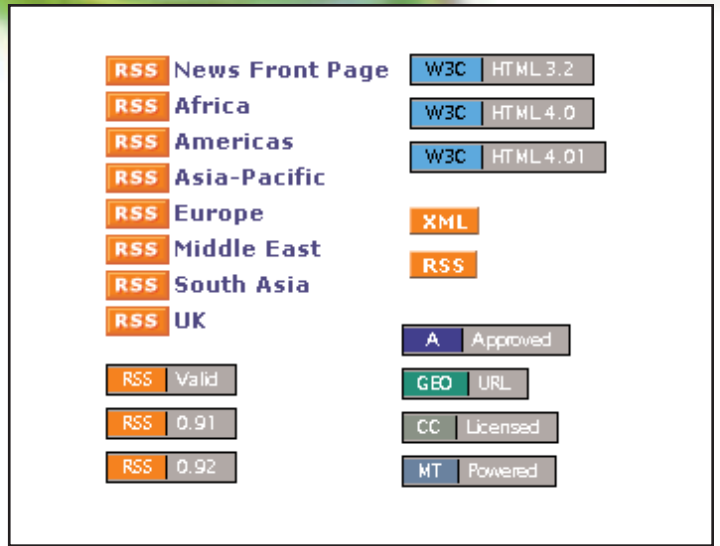
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Darlene Fichter is the coordinator of data library services at the University of Saskatchewan Libraries. She has been a project manager and consultant for several digital library, portal, intranet, and Web site projects. Darlene is also a columnist for Online Magazine and a frequent conference speaker about new and emerging information technologies.

Figure 1



Figure 2



to take place to make an RSS feed display nicely on your Web site as an HTML page or on part of a page. There are dozens of free tools that will convert any RSS feed to HTML. Some of these tools require no programming know-how whatsoever. Point, click, and paste. Others tools need to be installed and configured locally on a web server. While no technical knowledge is needed to use many tools, some experience with setting up style sheets can

come in handy in order to precisely match the look and feel of your site.

In Figure 1, the right-hand column of the Data Library page displays two sets of news feeds. The first feed shows local library news from the Data Library weblog, and the second feed has headlines from *The Daily*, published by Statistics Canada. This content is pulled in from RSS news feeds and changed on the fly to HTML. Every time the Data Library weblog or the StatsCan *Daily* is updated, the RSS feed is updated as well, and in turn the Data Library home page will show the newest headlines.

How easy is it to add an RSS feed to your Web site? It's pretty simple. First you need to spot a feed that would be interesting to your audience, such as BBC Science and Nature news. Be sure to check the copyright statements about RSS feeds before republishing them on your web site. The BBC has made their feeds available for anyone to republish. Some publishers stipulate that their feeds cannot be republished and are only for individual subscribers.

Follow along step-by-step to see for yourself how easy it is to publish fresh content.

Step 1

Start on the BBC Science and Nature page. Spot the orange RSS icon. See Figure 2 for examples of news feed icons. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech>

Step 2

Right-click on the RSS icon and choose "copy link location." Now you have the URL for the Science and Nature RSS feed. It looks like this: http://newsrss.bbc.co.uk/rss/newsonline_uk_edition/sci/tech/rss.xml

Step 3

Go to an "RSS to HTML" conversion tool, such as Feed Digest (www.feedit.com), and paste the URL into the Web form. See Figure 3.

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Figure 3



Figure 4



There are many different types of RSS feeds to scout out and to add to your site:

- Stock prices and sports scores
- Weather and traffic updates
- Get search results from search engines, library OPACs and RSS search sites. Specify your own “watch lists” for example, a company name in the news or competitor names and products
- Publish feeds of a contributor or a keyword search from social bookmarking or photo sharing sites

Fill out the other fields on the Web form and choose a layout style for displaying the headlines.

Step 4

Next, copy the JavaScript or PHP code that has been generated by conversion tool and paste it into your Web page where you want the headlines to appear. See Figure 4.

Step 5

View your Web page to see the latest BBC Science and Nature headlines.

Now that we have the basics down, it’s time to get creative. Some libraries, like Hennepin County Library (www.hclib.org), have added relevant feeds to various subject pages. The University of Saskatchewan Library has enhanced its electronic journal directory by adding headlines provided by journal publishers to specific journal title pages. Look at the journal *Nature* (<http://library.usask.ca/ejournals/display.php?id=954925427238>) to see how the database and RSS content can be combined. Usually the RSS feed for a specific journal contains the table of contents for the current issue. Suddenly a simple directory of electronic journals has new content updated automatically.

How about using a tool like RSS Digest to combine the feeds from five news sources to make one merged megascience news page for the library Web site or post the headlines in a column? There are lots of possibilities to explore. Perhaps you want to collect a hundred RSS feeds, do specific keyword searches and generate e-mail alerts to for researchers. There are tools that can help you do this but they require a little more technical know-how.

New ways of using RSS are popping up each day. Amazon.com just released “plogs,” which combines information from many sources, including entries from authors whose books you have purchased on Amazon.com. Libraries could enrich catalog pages by displaying authors’ weblog feeds or keyword search results for sites that mention the particular book title on library OPAC pages.

Step back and think about your audience. What are they interested in monitoring that you could pull together from RSS feeds? Are there Web pages on your site crying out for fresh content where RSS would fit in perfectly? Take time to try out RSS sites like SuperGlue (www.suprglu.com) and Feed Digest.

Finding Out More About RSS

RSS4Lib: Innovative ways libraries use RSS
<http://blogs.fletcher.tufts.edu/rss4lib>

RSS Compendium Blog
<http://ast.antville.org>

Locker gnome’s RSS & Atom Tips
<http://channels.lockergnome.com/rss>

Convert RSS to HTML
<http://tinyurl.com/cthf>

How to Write for Information Outlook

SLA's monthly magazine is written primarily by and for information professionals. *INFORMATION OUTLOOK* interprets the news and covers trends and issues that affect information professionals in a global environment.

If you know of an interesting improvement in a special library or information center... If you've solved a difficult problem—or prevented one... If you or a colleague have done something extraordinary... If you want to give something back to the profession by sharing your experiences with others... We want to hear from you.

We welcome proposals for articles of interest to information professionals.

Topics

The editorial calendar is a guide for the editorial direction of the magazine. Each issue covers many more topics than those included in the calendar. "Cover article" topics for one issue will be suitable as features in another.

When you propose an article, make sure you can relate the topic to the specific needs of our readers. *INFORMATION OUTLOOK* readers represent companies of all sizes. They work in large libraries with large staffs and as solo librarians in small companies. Their experience ranges from senior professionals to beginners just out of school.

INFORMATION OUTLOOK readers want to read articles about new techniques, new ideas, new trends. They're interested in articles about search engines, knowledge management, international issues, copyright law, technology, innovation, the Internet. They're interested in articles on administration, organization, marketing, and operations.

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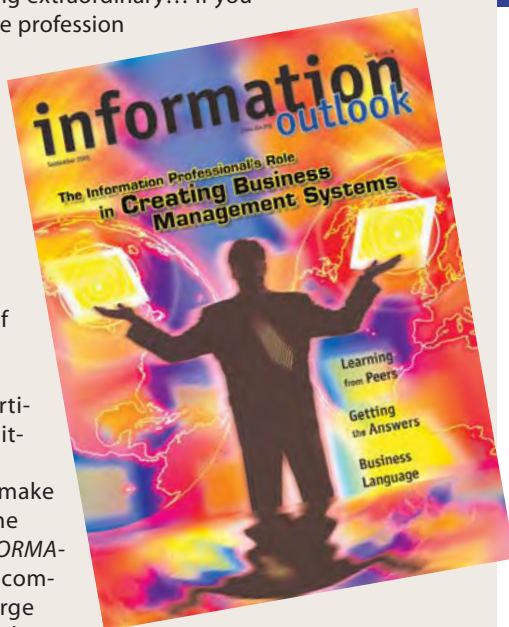
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Editorial Calendar

Each issue of *INFORMATION OUTLOOK* includes articles on many more topics than the ones listed here. The calendar is only a general guide for editorial direction. "Cover article" topics for one issue will be suitable as features in another.

Please email article queries and proposals to jadams@sla.org. If you are writing for a particular issue, your query should be early enough to allow for writing the article.

Issue	Cover Article	Deadline
June 2006	Digital Information services Possible topics: Selection process, RFP writing, maximizing usage.	Apr. 7, 2006
July 2006	Managing Possible topics: Planning, budgeting, supervising a staff, purchasing.	May 5, 2006
August 2006	Knowledge management Possible topics: KMI systems; in-house information; low-budget KMI.	June 9, 2006
September 2006	Internal Marketing Possible topics: Using intranets and e-mail, training internal clients, special events, tips for increasing usage, showing return on investment.	July 7, 2006
October 2006	Web searching Possible topics: Meta directories; using online search engines; the best sites for various content areas.	Aug. 11, 2006
November 2006	Copyright Possible topics: Global considerations, permissions, new laws and regulations.	Sept. 8, 2006
December 2006	Managing Possible topics: Planning, budgeting, supervising a staff, purchasing.	Oct. 6, 2006



To Keep KM Current, Pay Attention to Context Changes

By Seth Earley

Knowledge management has recently seen a resurgence.

After going through the hype phase a few years ago, organizations are realizing the value of putting standards to knowledge processes and formalizing a means of capturing and reusing them. The difference these days is that expectations are more realistic and technology has improved and matured.

I also find that clients have a better understanding of their objectives and they also realize the importance of principles of library science. One interesting trend is that what was once considered the area of user interface design and information architecture is now drawing more heavily on library science principles, especially those of Ranganathan, who pioneered concepts of faceted classification.

In terms of practical applications, most knowledge systems have at their core a repository of artifacts along with a means of submitting, vetting, approving, tagging, and reviewing knowledge objects. As in a traditional library,

objects are catalogued and classified. However, the collection changes and evolves much more quickly. KM systems are meant to support “high-velocity” decision points: processes where information needs to be accessed and applied quickly to meet a business need.

Customer support processes are an example of this, especially escalated support calls where outages might threaten service level agreements. The information is critical, and not having the answer is costly. The rate at which the collection changes and evolves is high, as new problems are solved or new products and configurations are introduced. Access scenarios are also based on more granular user roles and on very specific user tasks and processes. The taxonomy applied to this kind of content supports this higher rate of “information metabolism.”

Collaboration and More

In addition to being a repository of explicit content, knowledge systems typically also include a means to encourage collaboration and ad hoc problem solving. Problem solving and

collaboration require the ability to create content without being constrained by strict categorization processes—the nature of the content is that it is variable and evolving (at an even faster rate than the information described above). So users need a place where the context is the category.

Working on a project and creating an interim work product may require a system for organization, but only to differ-

Taxonomy KM

KM Program
lace



2 p.m. ET
Wednesday,
May 24

Instructor: **Seth Earley**

Details and registration information are at

www.sla.org/clickulive

Knowledge Management

Seth Earley has been implementing content management and knowledge management projects for over 12 years and has been in the technology field for more than 20. He is founder of the Boston Knowledge Management Forum and co-author of Practical Knowledge Management from the IBM Press. He is former adjunct professor at Northeastern University, where he taught graduate courses in knowledge management infrastructure and electronic business strategy.

entiate at a broad level. “Project plan” or “functional design” might be satisfactory in the context of a specific client. However, those tags would not be descriptive enough for the organization at large.

Once the project is complete or the problem is solved, the end product has a new context. It might serve as a lesson learned or a project history. Documents could be accessed to improve a process or solve a problem in a different context. Now the tags that are applied have to be in a broader context, yet detailed enough to allow user’s to zero in on what they need.

The terms of the taxonomy now need to reflect this new context and should be based on user objectives. For example, if I am a consultant and I need to scope out a new project, my tasks might be “determine project scope,” “develop project plan,” “create interview guide,” “conduct content audit,” “summarize project findings,” and so on.

From these tasks, there are particu-

lar documents I might want to access in order to improve my efficiency and speed the deliverable to the customer. I might want to locate templates of various kinds or look for past projects that solved similar problems. This understanding of user tasks will provide insights into the taxonomic terms that should be used to describe content.

The point is that knowledge management systems need to support very specific capabilities in order to justify the cost of maintaining existing content and harvesting new and evolving knowledge and expertise.

A Continuum

Therefore, the interesting challenge around systems for classification for knowledge management is that there is a continuum of knowledge processes—from unstructured to highly structured. Classifications need to account for this range of inherent “chaos” of knowledge creation as well as more

formalized and controlled process around knowledge access and application.

Frequently, taxonomies and metadata standards for tagging and classification are developed with a wide range of users and activities in mind. Sometimes this ends up as highly abstracted—too highly abstracted to be meaningful.

A taxonomy developed for a wide set of processes may not be suitable for a specific set of capabilities. In that case, the process needs to be reexamined so that terms and labels serve the purpose of users performing their specific task. The bottom line is that taxonomies and metadata need to enable capabilities. Those capabilities need to be close to the customer or close to the people who serve the customer in order to be most meaningful to managers and business process owners. These are the people who will support and fund KM programs or decide that those programs are not worth the time, expense, and effort of the organization. ●



CLICK U Live!

Topic:
The Impact of IP on Digitization Projects

12 April 2006
Part I Digitization Project Management in a Nutshell

26 April 2006
Part II Managing Intellectual Property Issues Within the Digitization Project

Presenters:
Jill Hurst-Wahl, Hurst Associates Ltd. K. Matthew Dames, Seso Group LLC

www.sla.org/clickulive

JUST ASK

The Best Way to Get Your Clients The Right Information Is to Find Out Exactly What They Want

Written by the information specialists of the
Regional Resource and Federal Center Network

Remember when you were a kid and you didn't know how to spell "conscientious" and someone told you to go look it up? How annoying. If you could look it up, you'd know how to spell it now wouldn't you!

People who come to us with information requests often have the same problem. They know what their question is, well kind of. Sometimes they don't realize how large the scope of their query really is or maybe it's so vague that it's almost impossible to pin down at all.

Being an information specialist isn't easy either because we have to know how to get our requesters to give us the information we need. If we ask the wrong question, then we'll end up on a wild information chase all over the Internet and beyond. Fortunately, the information specialists before me at the Regional Resource Centers had developed an inquiry guide that details not all the right questions, but how to ask them and how to listen for the right answers too.

You don't have to follow it slavishly, just use it as a guideline for interaction. Even though these guides were designed for our work, I think you'll find that they are pretty much transferable to any kind of situation where you need to find out about a problem or question that needs solving.

The guides were written through a combined effort by the Regional Resource and Federal Center (RRFC) Network, which includes information specialists who find, organize, and disseminate information on issues related to special education. The network's primary goal is to increase the depth and utility of high-quality information provided to administrators, policy makers, educators, and parents. These core services are provided

Inquiry Guide for Developing Technical Assistance Agreements

The table below suggests questions to ask when working with state agencies. These questions can help guide information specialists in the process of understanding a client's needs and identifying resources to meet those needs. Use some or all of these questions to build an information base. This guide can be used in initial conversations and reviewed later as the work progresses to help fill in the background of the issue.

Task

Problem

- Tell me about the problem you are facing.
- How did the problem come to light?
- What are some of the critical issues within the problem?
- Where does this problem exist (state education agency, local education agency)?

Need

- What do you see as your basic need?
- What might be some of the barriers to achieving the desired results?

Big questions

- What do you see as the big questions that need to be addressed?

Expected outcomes

- What outcomes or changes are you hoping for?

Deliverables

- What do you expect to accomplish from this effort?
- What sorts of products do you envision from this effort? (Manuals, policy, or something else?)
- What will you do with the resources/information provided? (How will the information be used?)

Context

History

- Briefly recap relevant events to date.
- What do you see as the next steps?
- What has been tried in the past?

Surrounding circumstances

- How would you describe the circumstances, climate, or culture surrounding this problem?
- What are the primary obstacles?
- Who are the critical players? The key stakeholders?

Resources

- Are there any human experts, products, papers, reports, or documents relevant to this task of which I should be aware?
- What information or resources do you already have?
- Whom have you already contacted?
- Are you the only person working on this project/issue?

Key informants

- Who are the key informants on this task, the people with relevant expertise or experience?

Task importance

- When do you need the information/resources? When is "too late"?

Impact

Broker

- Who will be my point person in this task?
- Is there someone else I should copy on communications?

Connection to student results

- How will this affect students?
- Is there a connection to outcomes for students?

free to states with federal funding for RRCs through the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA). RRC information specialists, or infospes, deal with inquiries that vary widely in content, scope, and audience. The Guidelines Conducting the reference interview, during which the information specialist elicits the information needs of the client, can be a delicate and complex process. The quality of the information response depends heavily on how well we understand and can respond to the client's needs. The process can be delicate, because a client may hesitate to share the "real" reason for his or her request. The inquiry guide above is intended as an aid to the interview process, helping us to both clarify the request and shape an effective response.

1. Approachability. Information specialists must ensure that potential requesters are aware of the services they can provide, and that potential requesters feel comfortable in coming to them for help.

2. Listening/Inquiring. The information specialist must be effective in identifying the requester's information needs and must do so in a manner that puts the requester at ease. As a good communicator, the information specialist:

- Focuses full attention on the requester and request.
- Uses a tone of voice (or writing) appropriate to the nature of the transaction.
- Communicates in a receptive, cordial, and encouraging manner.
- Allows the requester to state fully his or her information needs in his/her own words.
- Rephrases the question or request to ensure that he or she has understood, clarifies terminology.
- Uses open-ended questions to encourage the requester to provide additional information.
- Uses closed or clarifying questions to refine the search query.

Examples of open questions

- What would you like to have happen as a result of receiving this information?
- How will this information enhance your work?
- How will we know when you have enough information to meet this particular need?
- What methods have you already tried to find this information?
- Are there any products or other information sources of which I should be aware?
- How urgent is this request?

Examples of closed questions

- What have you already found?
- How many examples do you need?
- What is your deadline? What is the exact date the information is needed?
- How much do you need?
- To whom should the information go?

Inquiries



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3. Searching. The search process is the portion of the transaction in which behavior and accuracy meet. Without an effective search, the desired information is unlikely to be found. The search behavior of the information specialist determines the quality and accuracy of results. As an effective searcher, the specialist does the following:

- Constructs a competent and complete search strategy.
- Selects search terms that are most closely related to the information desired.
- Identifies appropriate sources that have the highest probability of containing information relevant to the query.
- Attempts to conduct the search within the requester's time frame.
- Explains how to use resources, when appropriate.
- Recognizes when to refer the requester to a more appropriate resource.

4. Follow-up. The reference transaction does not end when the information specialist sends the results of the search to the requester. The specialist is responsible for determining if the requester is satisfied with the results of the search and is also responsible for referring requesters to other sources. For successful follow-up, the information specialist takes the following steps:

- Asks the requester if the question has been completely answered.
- Consults other information specialists and field staff within the RRFC network when additional subject expertise is needed.
- Facilitates the process of referring the requester to another information source (e.g., state education agency, other RRC) by calling or mailing ahead, providing contact instructions, and providing the agency and requester with as much information as possible. 🌐

This article was submitted by Cybèle Elaine Werts on behalf of Regional Resource and Federal Center (RRFC) Network. Cybèle is an information specialist for WestEd's Northeast Regional Resource Center. NERRC is a part of Learning Innovations at WestEd, a research, development, and service education agency. She can be reached at cwerts@wested.org. The NERRC website is www.rrfcnwork.org/nerrc. Her personal website is www.supertechnogirl.com.





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Beyond Economic Rights

By Lesley Ellen Harris

In this column, we generally deal with the economic rights in copyright law, rights like reproduction and public performance; however, both international and domestic copyright laws also provide for “moral rights.” Whereas the purpose of economic rights are to provide some money—payment for rights in copyright—to the author/copyright owner, the purpose of moral rights is to protect the personality or reputation of an author (and not necessarily the owner) of a copyright-protected work. Moral rights stem from the leading international copyright treaty, the Berne Convention (found at www.wipo.int.) Article 6bis of Berne states the following:

(1) Independently of the author's economic rights, and even after the transfer of the said rights, the author shall have the right to claim authorship of the work and to object to any distortion, mutilation or other modification of, or other derogatory action in relation to, the said work, which would be prejudicial to his honor or reputation.

As with all provisions in Berne, the 160 member states, including the U.S. and Canada, must meet the minimum standards set out in

Berne. Thus, each member state must provide for moral rights of paternity and integrity. Of course, countries are free to go beyond these minimums and provide further rights, such as the right of association or to withdraw permission to use a work.

Note that moral rights are separate from economic rights, and even authors who have assigned their economic rights may have moral rights. In some countries (Canada), moral rights may be waived whereas in other countries (France) authors may not waive their moral rights and may always exercise them. Also, the duration of moral rights varies from country to country, expiring on the death of the author, to 50 years after his death (Canada) to perpetual existence (France.)

Right of Paternity

This right refers to the author's right to have his name on a work, to use a pseudonym, or to remain anonymous. Generally, an author has this right whenever he has economic rights in a work, and this right applies in relation to uses covered by the economic rights. For example, an author has the right to have his name on the cover of his book.

Right of Integrity

The second component of moral rights, as set out in Berne, is the right of integrity. This is the right of the author to object to any changes to his work that may harm his reputation as an author. This harm would be a question of fact that would have to be determined in court through the testimony of witnesses. For example, painting a mustache on the Mona Lisa (were the Mona Lisa still protected by copyright) would likely be a violation of Da Vinci's moral rights. Closer to home, manipulating a scanned photograph may also be a violation of moral rights, if prejudicial to the honor or reputation of the photographer.

Moral Rights in the U.S.

The moral rights set out in Berne are intended to apply to all types of copyright-protected works. However, when joining Berne in 1989, the U.S. took a narrower interpretation of the requirements in Berne (and in some circles, a controversial one as to whether the U.S. is in fact complying with Berne). In the U.S., moral rights are arguably protected under various federal and state laws, including explicit protection (through an amendment to the U.S. Copyright Act by the

Visual Artists Rights Act (VARA) of 1990).

Unlike Berne, VARA protects only one group of authors: visual artists or, more accurately, those who create “works of visual art.” These works include paintings, drawings, prints, sculptures, and photographs, existing in a single copy or a limited edition of 200 signed and numbered copies or fewer. Posters, maps, globes, motion pictures, electronic publications, and applied art are explicitly excluded from VARA.

VARA gives visual artists the right to claim authorship in their work, and to prevent the use of their name in association with a work. In addition, artists are granted the right to prevent the intentional distortion, mutilation or other objectionable modification of their works. Artists who qualify for federal moral rights protection can also prevent any destruction of certain works. Some states, such as New York and California, also have moral rights protection for visual artists.

Under VARA, moral rights are not transferable by license or assignment, but may be waived in writing. The rights end with the life of the author (unlike economic rights, which endure for 50 years after the death of the author.) ●

Lesley Ellen Harris is a copyright lawyer/consultant who works on legal, business, and strategic issues in the publishing, content, entertainment, Internet, and information industries. She is the editor of the print newsletter, The Copyright and New Media Law Newsletter, in its 10th year of publication in 2006. If you would like a sample copy of this newsletter, email: contact@copyrightlaws.com.

She is a professor at SLA's Click University where she teaches a number of online courses on copyright, licensing, and managing copyright and digital content for SLA members. See: <http://www.sla.org/clickulive>



April 2006

Communities of Practice - Knowledge at Work!

5-7 April 2006
Salem, OR USA
<http://www.olaweb.org/conference/>

Buying & Selling eContent

Information Today
9-11 April 2006
Scottsdale, AZ, USA
<http://www.buy-sell-econtent.com/>

EUSIDIC Annual Conference European Association of Information Services

9-11 April 2006
Innsbruck, Austria
<http://www.eusidic.net/>

InterDoc Symposium

10-12 April 2006
Ottawa, ON, Canada
http://www.interdoc.com/site/symposium2006/index_e.htm

The Impact of IP on Digitization Projects Part I - Digitization Project Management in a Nutshell

12 April 2006
<http://www.sla.org/clickulive>

20th Annual AIIP Conference

Association of Independent Information Professionals
19-23 April 2006
Coral Gables, FL, USA
<http://www.aiip.org/Conference/2006/index.html>

ACRL/CNI/EDUCAUSE Joint Virtual Conference

20-21 April 2006
<http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlvents/virtualconference.htm>

Search Engine Meeting

Infonortics
24-24 April 2006
Boston, MA, USA
<http://www.infonortics.com/searchengines/>

The Impact of IP on Digitization Projects Part II - Managing Intellectual Property Issues Within the Digitization Project

26 April 2006
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SCIP06

Society of Competitive Intelligence Professionals
April 26-29
Orlando, FL, USA

May 2006

Annual AIIM ON DEMAND Conference & Expo

AIIM: The ECM Association
15-18 May 2006
Philadelphia, PA, USA
<http://www.aiim.org/article-events.asp?ID=3277>

Always Fresh - Fast Content for Your Web Site and Users

17 May 2006
<http://www.sla.org/clickulive>

37th Annual Conference of the CPLQ

Corporation of Professional Librarians of Québec
17-19 May 2006
Laval, Québec, Canada
http://www.cbppq.qc.ca/congres/congres2006/Call_for_papers_2006.html

MLA '06

Medical Library Association
19-24 May 2006
Phoenix, AZ, USA
<http://www.mlanet.org/am/>

ICEIS 2006

8th International Conference on Enterprise Information Systems
May 23-27
Paphos, Greece
www.iceis.org

Taxonomy KM -- Where to Go Once the KM Program Is Already in Place

24 May 2006
<http://www.sla.org/clickulive>

LIDA 2006

Libraries in the Digital Age
29 May-4 June 2006
Dubrovnik and Mljet, Croatia
<http://www.ffos.hr/lida/>

June 2006

CAIS/ACSI 2006 Annual Conference

Canadian Association for Information Science
1-3 June 2006
Toronto, ON, Canada
<http://www.cais-acsi.ca/2006call.htm>

SLA 2006 Annual Conference

11 - 14 June 2006
Baltimore, MD, USA
<http://www.sla.org/baltimore2006>

JCDL 2006

Joint Conference on Digital Libraries
11-15 June 2006
Chapel Hill, NC, USA
<http://www.jcdl2006.org/>

2006 CLA Conference

Canadian Library Association
14-17 June 2006
Ottawa, ON, Canada
http://www.cla.ca/conference/cla2006/event_proposals.htm

LISA V

Library and Information Services in Astronomy V

June 18-21
Cambridge, MA, USA
www.cfa.harvard.edu/library/lisa

AH 2006

Adaptive Hypermedia and Adaptive Web-Based Systems
21-23 June 2006
Dublin, Ireland
<http://www.ah2006.org/>

ALA Annual Conference

American Library Association
22-28 June 2006
New Orleans, LA, USA
<http://www.ala.org/annual>

July 2006

Ninth International ISKO Conference

International Society for Knowledge Organization
4-7 July 2006
Vienna, Austria
<http://isko.univie.ac.at/cms2/>

99th AALL Annual Meeting & Conference

American Association of Law Libraries
8-12 July 2006
St. Louis, MO, USA

Information Seeking in Context Conference 2006

19-21 July 2006
Sydney, Australia

August 2006

Third International Conference on Knowledge Management (ICKM)

University of Greenwich et al.
1-2 August 2006
Greenwich, UK

29th Annual International ACM SIGIR Conference

6-11 August 2006
Seattle, WA, USA

Libraries and Competition: Intelligence for Management and Strategy - Part I

15 August 2006
<http://www.sla.org/clickulive>

72nd Annual World Library and Information Congress

International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)
20-24 August 2006
Seoul, Republic of Korea

Annual Reviews www.annualreviews.com	24
Association for Computing Machinery www.acm.org	18
Dialog www.dialog.com	Back Cover
Elsevier www.elsevier.com	11
Gale www.gale.com	23
LexisNexis www.lexisnexis.com	Inside Back Cover
Ovid Technologies www.ovid.com	1
Powell's Technical Books www.powells.com	9
Thomson info.thomsonbusinessintelligence.com	Inside Front Cover
Wall Street Journal www.wsj.com	2

Search Engine Alternatives

Will you suffer the DTs if you quit Google?

By Stephen Abram

Delirium tremens: (colloquially, the DTs) is a condition associated with complete and sudden withdrawal by an individual who has a history of long-term dependence on a certain behavior addiction, such as with alcohol consumption, heroin or steroid use, or the like.

Ever wonder if you're addicted to Google? Do you need your daily or hourly fix? Does your second choice of search engine come to mind instantly? What about a third and fourth?

Finding the Methadone of Search Engines

First let's not forget the real™ search engines. Those search engines that run the big guys, Dialog, LexisNexis, your OPAC, etc. These are the heavy lifters of the search world and actually do proper, targeted, Boolean logic and retrieve accurate results sets that are not optimized to disguise inaccurate results in the interests of speed of retrieval. I am always amazed at the number of articles that quote search retrieval numbers as some form of "data," when these numbers do vary by time of day, search traffic, server, locality, etc. When you're seeking comprehensive and quality results you just can't beat the good, proprietary engines.

The Web engines are great for meat cleaver searchers

where the top-of-mind, top-of-the-list results are sufficient. The popularity and other mathematically or socially-based algorithms are great to bring the good answers to the forefront. Information professionals know that the good or the most popular answer is not always the best. Best counts more in research that has an impact. Will the patient be cured or made healthier? Where should I invest my money without following the masses? What strategy should I bet my company on? Whatever: Competitive advantage comes from finding that golden needle in the haystack, not finding the same stuff as the rest of the mob.

So let's make sure we keep aware of the full range of search tools we need to have in our toolkit. Here's a tip. Take the list below and write one of each URL in the sidebar into your calendar every Monday morning. Change your homepage from Google (or your intranet, etc.) to each one for one week each. I think that you really can't get to know or be comfortable with a search engine until you play with it for a week. Remember that you're just

learning and that some of these search engines are betas.

There are the Big Four, which you should acquaint yourself with in case you've forgotten them or because they've changed a lot since you last looked. Three of the big four are Yahoo!, MSN Search, and AOL. They comprise, with Google, the only remaining big harvests of the Web. Many other search engines rely on their harvests for delivering the user search experience. Oh yeah, and also remember that Yahoo! and some other search sites (like MySpace) get significantly more page views than Google. Why is that? Visit and learn.

Here's a short list of alternative search tools to add to your information pro's kit bag.

In the traditional vein, the sites like Ask.com, Teoma, HotBot, and AllTheWeb, are still worth playing with and seeing what innovations they're doing in the general search space. I'd probably not get too into Lycos, AltaVista, LookSmart, Netscape Search, etc., which are just vestiges of their former selves. But you never know who's gong to rise from the dead in this

space. They still often have good technology that now has a different business model than that of public Web search. You can visit and see what you think, but these guys are part of Web search history. Most of them now rely on the Web harvest from one of the big four.

However, the above list is pretty traditional and oriented to the general search space and to retrieval results that are usually displayed as simple lists and look pretty similar to each other. They're useful in playing the Guess My Business Model game. Am I really about the search experience, server sales, proofs of concept, ads, social networking, or what?

The Fun Space to Search and Play

My personal alternative favorite right now is Exalead. I love the organization it uses and use the information density of its display to provide some context for my search results and alternative ways to view them. I also like the thumbnail previews. It takes a little getting used to, but it's worth the effort.

Stephen Abram, MLS, was elected in March to serve as SLA's next president-elect. His term as SLA president will begin in January 2008. He is vice president, innovation, for SirsiDynix. He is an SLA Fellow and the past president of the Ontario Library Association and the immediate past president of the Canadian Library Association. In June 2003 he was awarded SLA's John Cotton Dana Award. This column contains his personal perspectives and does not necessarily represent the opinions or positions of SirsiDynix. He would love to hear from you at stephen.abram@sirsidynix.com.



If you're not into visual displays, play with Mooter. It uses visualization of your results as a middle step. I think it helps improve the quality of the question and the search by providing more contexts. The multiple clusters remind us about similar words that have multiple meanings. (Hint: Try searching "mercury" or "Ford")

Clusty is a search engine powered by Vivisimo. I like the left-hand sidebar which

displays a taxonomic navigation option. Again, it helps to improve the quality of my searching rather than just having some math PhD decide what is relevant through an algorithm. It puts more personal choice back into my fingertips.

If you've avoided playing with visualization tool Grokker because it involves a download, you can experience it more easily now. Just go to its homepage and

you can search Yahoo! using Grokker through a Web-based client.

Last, and one of my favorite playthings, is KartOO. This search tool is developing rapidly. Pay particular attention to the language choices, visual maps, taxonomy display and the next map button. I have found that kids get this display, mode quite quickly, before they've been taught to prefer plain lists.

Those sites may help you break your addiction to Google. You can find dozens more on the lists maintained at SearchEngineWatch, so don't feel that you need to limit yourself to just my list. There are plenty more!

And we won't even start discussing your addiction to e-mail. We'll leave that for your next therapy session. (Grin.) I'm looking forward to seeing many of you in Baltimore. The doctor will be in. 🌐

Search Engine Alternatives

SearchEngineWatch Search Engine Lists
<http://searchenginewatch.com/links/>

Yahoo!
<http://www.yahoo.com>

MSN Search
<http://search.msn.com>

AOL
<http://search.aol.com>

MySpace
<http://www.myspace.com>

Ask.com (formerly Ask Jeeves)
<http://www.ask.com>

Teoma
<http://www.teoma.com>

Lycos
<http://www.lycos.com>

AltaVista
<http://www.altavista.com>

LookSmart
<http://www.looksmart.com>

Netscape Search
<http://search.netscape.com>

HotBot
<http://www.hotbot.com>

AllTheWeb
<http://www.alltheweb.com>

Mooter
<http://www.mooter.com>

Exalead
<http://www.exalead.com>

Clusty
<http://www.clusty.com>

Grokker
<http://www.grokker.com>

KartOO
<http://www.kartoo.com>

Not Another Survey?

By John R. Latham

Spring has sprung, the cherry blossoms are out, so let's do some surveys. I don't think that's what really happens, but sometimes it feels like it. Whether it is establishing one's value within the organization or institution, checking the demographics of customers or users, or finding out trends within the organization or industry, we need surveys if we want to base decisions on supportable evidence. Ironically it is often those who really need the information who are loath to complete the surveys. Surveys are a bore to complete, but they are a necessary component of information management.

It is interesting to note that in four out of my last twelve Information Management columns I refer to the need to carry out surveys for some reason or another. Surveys can be informal ones, done orally, or detailed ones carried out by independent consultants, but regardless of the format you have to convince the recipients of the survey that it is worth completing. I am not going to consider the design of survey instruments here, but here are some tips on preparing that all important introduction.

Although one needs to keep the introduction as short as possible, ideally it should include the following: State clearly what the objectives of the survey are, and what the respondent is going to gain from completing the survey. Give an estimate of the time to complete the survey, and give an incentive if it is expected to take more than, say, 15 minutes. This may be in the form of a full report on the results of the survey, product discounts, or even cash, but always indicate how and to whom the results are going to be made available. Explain if there is a function to save and return to the survey, and give the completion date and a contact person for questions or problems when completing the survey. If the survey does not appear to be relevant to certain recipients, explain if you want them to start the survey, because their responses will not be used when their status is established. If they don't get past the intro, the rest of the survey will be a waste of time.

In a recent issue of *SLA Connections* we

informed members that a number of SLA surveys were being carried out in 2006, and asked for their support in completing them if selected. I summarize below the status of a number of the surveys, which will be, or have been, carried out in 2006.

Future of Librarians

This is a two-year study sponsored by the Institute for Museum and Library Science that will identify the nature of anticipated labor shortages in the library and information science field over the next decade, assess the number and types of library and information science jobs that will become available in the U.S. either through retirement or new job creation, determine the skills that will be required to fill such vacancies, and recommend effective approaches to recruiting and retaining workers to fill them. The study will result in better tools for workforce planning and management, better match of demand and supply, and improved recruitment and retention of librarians. SLA is one of the partners in this important study led by Dr. José-Marie Griffiths, Dean of the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. SLA members and staff are involved in the national and special advisory panels, and survey instrument design.

Information on the progress of the study is maintained on the public Web site (<http://imlsworkforce.org>). Because of the requirement that project results reflect regional differences within states, the library survey includes a census of all public and academic libraries, as well as a sample of 6,000 school and 6,000 special libraries. However, each surveyed library will receive one-fifth of the data collection instruments, where some questions are common to all libraries and some unique to one-fifth of the libraries. This design ensures that the reporting burden is minimized for each library and yet collectively obtains all needed information. At the time I am writing, we are

awaiting approval of the survey instruments from the U.S. Government's Office of Management and Budget before they can be distributed.

Two presentations are being given at the Annual Conference in Baltimore on the workforce study. An update on the whole study is being given by José-Marie Griffiths, and a presentation on the work of the Business Libraries Advisory panel and its opinion paper is being given by members of that panel.

2006 Membership Study

SLA has carried out a major survey of its members and non-members every five years since 1986. The objective of the survey is for information to be made available to SLA management to help us understand the needs and demographics of our members and potential members in order to make informed and effective decisions for the future of the association. The survey is administered by independent consultants, who prepare a detailed report for consideration by the SLA management and board of directors. A summary of the results will be made available to the members.

Task force surveys

A number of the task forces set up by President Rollo in 2005 are using surveys to support their reports to the board of directors in June 2006. They may well have been sent out by the time this column goes to print, but we hope that members will participate in these surveys, which will help the task forces make informed reports to the board on the members' behalf.

2006 Salary Survey and Workplace Study


SLA's annual salary survey will be sent out for online completion to U.S. and Canadian members in late spring. The additional workplace study survey sent out for the first time in 2005 may be incorporated into the 2006 membership study for one year.

Although tiresome, surveying is a necessity if we are to keep up with the ever-changing needs and requirements of the members.

John R. Latham is the director of the SLA Information Center. He can be reached at jlatham@sla.org.



The Information Center is sponsored by Factiva, a Dow Jones and Reuters company.



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