

SLISTEN UP!

The Online Newsletter of LISSA: The Library and Information Science Student Association at the University of South Carolina

Volume VIII, Issue 6

Summer 2007

Dates to Remember

August 11:

Graduation Day, 10:30 a.m., Colonial Center

SLIS Graduation Party, 4 p.m., Davis College

New student orientation @ Marshall University, Charleston, W. Va. campus, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

August 13:

New student orientation @ Waynesboro, Va. High School, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

August 17:

Barbeque social for new SLIS students, Gibbs Green near Davis College, 5:30 p.m. to 8 p.m.

August 18:

New student orientation @ USC (Currell College, room 107 & Davis College), 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

August 21 or 22:

Next LISSA meeting, Davis College (consult student listserves for date and time)

August 23:

First day of classes for Fall semester

September 7:

First SLIS Panning for Gold Continuing Education Workshop (for more information: <http://www.libsci.sc.edu/ce/pangoldfall07.pdf>)

LISSA Students Recap Summer Conferences

LISSA was well represented at some major library conferences over the summer, and three of the organization's officers offered their reflections on their experiences for SLISTen UP!

Travis Ferrell, president of LISSA, and Mary Anne Hamblen, LISSA secretary, both reported on what they saw at the American Library Association conference in Washington, D.C. Patrick McLaughlin, the vice-president of LISSA, in addition to attending the ALA conference, went to the Medical Library Association conference in Philadelphia in May.

Travis wrote about a digital library administered by Iranian dissidents that promotes human rights and democracy in Iran. He also recalled accepting LISSA's honor of ALA Student

Chapter of the Year Runner-Up for 2006-2007.

Mary Anne wrote about LISSA's ongoing participation in the Lubuto Library Project, both at the conference and here in Columbia. The project builds and supplies libraries in Africa for children affected by poverty and HIV/AIDS. She also described LISSA members' visits to the U.S. Census Bureau and the Folger Shakespeare Library.

Patrick's report on the MLA conference begins below, while the ALA articles appear inside this issue.



MLA Event Impresses First-Time Conference Attendee

By Patrick McLaughlin

My first experience with a professional conference came back in May of this year, when I attended the Medical Library Association's Annual Meeting in Philadelphia. Although I was late and missed the FREE New Members' / First-time Attendees' breakfast, I was able to catch a very entertaining and hilarious Presidential Address by Mark Funk, in which he talked about a

Web 2.0 task force and a revitalization of the MLA's Website. Arthur Caplan, a bioethics professor at the University of

Pennsylvania, followed President Funk with a discussion about the peer reviewing process. He pointed out the flaws with peer reviewing and included specific examples, and then he finished his talk with some recommendations to fix the process.

There were a lot of great posters displayed at the

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("MLA conference" continued)

conference, including one from staff members at the USC School of Medicine Library, which you can view here: http://www.mlanet.org/am/am2007/e-present/20070521_02_mcconnaughy.ppt. One of the best things I learned about at the conference was the uBio Project (<http://www.ubio.org>) by The Marine Biological Laboratory. The uBio Project was created to index and organize information about biological organisms. With uBio, you can discover a wealth of information about your favorite animal. You can even subscribe to your animal's RSS feed and receive information updates about that animal.

All in all, the MLA's Annual Meeting was a lot of fun and a great learning experience. I recommend that everyone go to at least one conference just to see what they are like.

President's Notes

By Travis Ferrell

I was asked to write about my experience at the annual ALA Conference in Washington, DC, this summer. This was my first national conference (LIS related or otherwise), and I have to confess it was a lot to take in. There were events at several different hotels in addition to the Washington Conference Center. That's the pretty basic stuff I expect anyone who goes to a conference like this will tell you about when they talk about ALA or any sufficiently large professional conference.

What I was most impressed with, and what I want to talk about, are some of the things that I learned, which were very board in scope. I definitely feel that I came away both with very useful pragmatic information that I can apply and a better appreciation of LIS.

Perhaps the most interesting session I attended was about immigrants and libraries. Most of the event covered the history of an immigrant population to library systems when they first arrive and the relationship future, native born generations of that initial population have, and how that develops over time for subsequent generations. In the course of this session, there was an additional, final presentation on the digital library of the Abdorrahman Boroumand Foundation (www.abfiran.org/), a project run by expatriate Iranian dissidents whose father

was killed (while in exile in France). I was honestly astounded by what I saw. It's Human Rights and Democracy Library documents the official Iranian state accounts of why they have executed someone along with the accounts of loved ones. It is both a memorial to the victims of the Iranian regime and a resource for dissidents both in and outside of Iran. The foundation is currently translating works on human rights into Farsi to both encourage debate and provide new intellectual frameworks of human rights to dissidents challenging the regime. Some of those materials are being used right now by women in Iran seeking to have one million people sign a petition ending misogynistic discrimination.

The whole event opened eyes to what librarians in the modern world can do in terms of serving others in the modern era of increasingly ever more sophisticated communications technology. You can be in the United States and help memorialize the life of a victim of a violent regime and provide an intellectual arsenal to be at the disposal of the oppressed within their own country. What also surprised me is that this library is not run by librarians or by people who have no training in librarianship, but also that they had questions for librarians about how to better organize their information. New technology allows the untrained to do a great deal in presenting information that would never have been possible before, but people trained in helping users find what they need when they need it is still a pressing need.

Besides a conceptual growth in terms of just what kinds of services and patrons we are now capable of serving, I also just got a great deal of very, very useful information that I have been able to share with interested parties. Two sessions held by the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Round Table (GLBTRT), have been particularly helpful. One dealt with aging issues for GLBT patrons and how to serve their needs, and the other dealt with meeting the information needs of female-to-male (FTM) transsexual patrons. The latter has been particularly useful because quality materials for trans library users are hard to come by, particularly for FTMs because most material that you do find are for male-to-female (MTF) related. Even at this session, attending librarians handed out information and shared what they had. It was a really wonderful thing. Whenever I come across GLBT bibliographies or websites compiled or maintained by LIS professionals, I pass them on to various activist rights groups so that they can disseminate them to their members or friends online. Particularly in a very rural area, that is very important to GLBT users because their libraries may either not have what is needed or they might not feel comfortable going to the library. A lot has changed, but the transgendered still deal with a great deal of persecution, and it was nice to find materials and make contacts with other interested LIS professionals who make a difference to patrons.

And of course, LISSA did win Runner-Up in the ALA Student Chapter of the Year for 2006-2007, and we accepted the award at ALA. It was a very nice moment, and I would like to take the time to thank everyone in LISSA who worked hard, not to win an award, but just to do a good job because they care about what they are doing. **That of course includes a big thank you to Dr. Feili Tu, our advisor. Thank you for all the wonderful work you do.**

“Seasoned Conference-Goer” Impressed by ALA Event and Nation’s Capital

By Mary Anne Hamblen

I consider myself a fairly seasoned conference-goer, so when I set off at 9:00 P.M. from Columbia, South Carolina to Washington, D.C, accompanied by four School of Library and Information Science (SLIS) friends in a South Carolina State minivan on the eve of the American Library Association (ALA) conference, I was not expecting to be surprised. What an adventure it turned out to be! One of the largest conferences in the country, the ALA Annual Conference counted 28,635 attendees this year, including exhibitors.

The diversity of sessions and topics offered at the conference is truly amazing: over 300 sessions and programs. A number of sessions and events are scheduled for newcomers, both to ALA and to the conference itself. The organization makes a special effort to welcome, orient and include new members with “Conference 101” programs such as New Member Roundtable (NMRT) sessions, introductory sessions for special interests including American Association of School Librarians (AASL) 101, Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) 101, Association for Library Collections and Technical Services (ALCTS) 101, and Public Library Association (PLA) 101: ALA Annual Conference for First Time Attendees, among many others. The NMRT also hosts a “Meet and Greet,” a student reception, and the NMRT Social. Below are a few of the personal experiences and highlights reported by some of our own USC SLIS ALA 2007 conference attendees.



Photos taken at the construction site in September, 2006, show the walls, floor and windows of the first Lubuto Library, at the Fountain of Hope in Lusaka, Zambia, beginning to take shape. (from <http://www.lubuto.org/>)

Travis Ferrell teamed up with Jane Meyers, founder and president of the Lubuto Library Project, to visit publishers’ vending booths at the conference and solicit book donations for the organization. The Lubuto project began by addressing the ever-growing tragedy of Africa’s street children, many orphaned due to the death of parents from AIDS. With the premise that libraries do much more than provide reading material, Lubuto got its start as a weekly reading program in the late 1990s. The project has expanded to include safe physical spaces for impoverished central African children to learn, the only hope for escaping their circumstances. Over the past few years publishers, schools, and libraries in the United Kingdom and the US have donated books to the project, headquartered in Washington, D.C. For more information on Lubuto, which means knowledge, enlightenment and light in the African Bemba language, visit their website at <http://www.lubuto.org/>. LISSA has volunteered long distance for the Lubuto Project over the past year. If you are interested in becoming involved, contact Travis Ferrell at travisferrell@hotmail.com or Mary Anne Hamblen at mhamblen1@earthlink.net.

Loni Lewis was impressed by her in-depth tour of the United States Census Bureau. Offered twice during the ALA conference, the tour was free, but participants were required to sign up ahead of time, not only to provide a number expected for the tour, but because a background check is routinely performed on all attendees. Along with census information, the Census Bureau complex houses other federal materials, some of a sensitive nature.

Loni was impressed by the design and architecture of the building itself, and for good reason. Located in Skidmore, MD, the 2.5 million square foot structure designed by architectural firm Skidmore, Owings and Merrill was completed in January of 2007. Situated on an 80-acre wooded site, the complex accommodates two banks, two cafeterias and a gym. There are green spaces incorporated, and areas provided for employees and visitors to relax or nap.

The library, Loni reports, was quite open and beautiful, with two stories. Several different collections are housed in the building, and on the tour specialists from each area spoke and answered questions. The tour began with a history of the U.S. Census. The first census was conducted in 1790, and took 10 years to complete. Forms were much longer with many more questions than people answer today. The nature of the questions has changed over the decades, as

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well. For example, there is no longer a question on religion. Loni learned that the United States has been instrumental in helping start other countries' census programs, and the Census Bureau Library preserves documents regarding foreign census endeavors. Also, the Census Bureau collects numerous papers written about the U.S. Census and the institution, including unpublished manuscripts. For a wealth of all sorts of information and interesting statistical tidbits browse the official U.S. Census Bureau website at <http://www.census.gov/>.

Washington, D.C., too, offers up some great fare for the library and archive-minded. Take, for instance, the Folger Shakespeare Library. The Folger collection is the most extensive Shakespeare collection in the world, drawing numerous scholarly researchers each year. Even if one's interest does not lie in sixteenth century literature, the state-of-the-art conservation lab at the Folger is worth checking out. An interactive digital facsimile of Shakespeare's First Folio, published two years after his death, is an amazing testament to the innovation and skill of the Folger conservators. The library also collects and displays memorabilia from the world of theater from the early modern age through the present.

Potential researchers at the Folger Library are carefully screened before they are allowed access to the collection. Once accepted, research is conducted in one of the lovely period reading rooms; outside visitors in the exhibit hall can catch tantalizing glimpses from behind closed red velvet curtains. As luck would have it, a docent was giving a tour while we were there, opening one of the locked doors and allowing us a peek into the oak-paneled library, evocative of Tudor England.

Later, my companion and I sat in the semi-darkness of the Elizabethan-style theater where regular performances are given, savoring the atmosphere, and imagining that it was centuries ago. Not for long, however, as the fumes from paint remover made us somewhat dizzy! Workmen on scaffolding were in the process of painstakingly restoring some of the decor on one of the three-tiered wooden balconies, another ongoing preservation project. Go to <http://www.folger.edu/> for detailed information about the library and its cutting-edge conservation program.

Next year's ALA annual conference promises just as much variety, information and interest. For those contemplating attending ALA 2008 in Anaheim, CA, we leave you with one proven and timeless piece of advice: Do not spend your money on the food at the conference venue! It is greatly over-priced.

Congratulations are in order to ...

Todd Rix, a December 2006 MLIS graduate, who started in July as the Electronic Resources Librarian at Coker College in Hartsville, S.C.

Dr. Stephen Bajjaly, longtime SLIS faculty member, who on August 1



became the director of the Library and Information Science Program at Wayne State University in Detroit. Dr. Bajjaly had been at USC's School of Library and Information Science for 14 years, serving as an associate professor and associate director for undergraduate studies. The announcement by Wayne State University can be read at <http://www.media.wayne.edu/releases.php?year=2007&month=6>.



Do you have questions or comments about this issue? Ideas or submissions for a future issue? Please send them to:

MCCLAING@mailbox.sc.edu

From the Editor

The encouraging thoughts and best wishes of LISSA's members remain with Dr. John Olsgaard, who is continuing his recovery from illness. We look forward to seeing him back at Davis College very soon!

For those of us who were lucky enough to be a student in Dr. Olsgaard's Academic Libraries class, much of what appears in the accompanying story, reprinted from the website of the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* newspaper, will sound familiar.

To those who may have concerns that libraries are in danger of disappearing "now that students can do research on their laptops," you will be heartened to read that "fears of library obsolescence have never panned out."

"In fact ... the infinite nature of the World Wide Web makes the role of libraries and librarians as critical as ever."

I hope that you will consider this article yet another affirmation of the essential role of library and information professionals in the 21st century!

Until next month,

Gene



\$52 million to revitalize Pitt's Hillman Library

Despite the Internet and other sources of information, university's library remains academic heart of the campus

Wednesday, May 16, 2007

By Sally Kalson, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

Fifty-two million dollars sounds like a lot of money, but it won't change the face of Hillman Library on the University of Pittsburgh campus.

The library, built in the 1960s, has never been noted for its architectural warmth and charm. But with its 1.5 million volumes, 200 computing devices, special collections, rare books, manuscripts, photographs and cafe, it gets a heavy workout from students, faculty and scholars.



Hillman Library (<http://www.umc.pitt.edu/tour/tour-075-photo.html>)

Now Hillman is slated for \$52 million worth of renovations, part of a \$1 billion university-wide modernization project that will unfold over the next dozen years. The library work, however, is eight to 10 years away, said Robert Pack, vice-provost for academic planning and resources management.

He said most of the investment will go to replacing the building's systems -- heating, ventilation and air conditioning, electrical lines and cables, information technology and telecommunications. Asbestos will be removed, and the interior will be redesigned to better house the library's collections.

"We're constantly building new collections, refurbishing old ones and sending things out to our storage facility," he said. The storage facility, in Point Breeze, houses several million volumes.

"We've looked at what work is likely to be needed in eight to 10 years to make sure the library is fully current for the needs of a major research library," said Dr. Pack.

The whole list of university projects will be executed on a timeline of most to least critical, he said.

"The library is in less critical condition. There's no specific need to spend major amounts of money on it right now."

The idea of the college library functioning as the heart of the campus might seem out of date, now that students can do research on their laptops without leaving their dorm rooms. But fears of library obsolescence have never panned out, said Robert L. Horrell, dean of libraries at Dartmouth College and a former librarian at Harvard and Syracuse universities.

In fact, he said, the infinite nature of the World Wide Web makes the role of libraries and librarians as critical as ever.

"Even with the incredible amount of information available on the Internet, libraries continue to be the place where students, scholars and faculty come for help in navigating all that information," he said.

In addition, he said, research libraries offer materials from all over the world that are available only in print.

"Libraries are still gathering places," Dr. Horrell continued. "We've had pressure to expand our hours and have done so. Having a cafe doesn't hurt, and the kinds of amenities that students and faculty have come to expect only enhance the collegiality.

"Ten or 20 years ago, some people wondered why renovate or expand when users can have access to information wherever they want to receive it. But our experience has been that any time a library expands, it is full of users."

That has certainly been true of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, where renovated branches have seen huge increases in usage -- not just on the computers, but also in borrowing books and audio-visual items. Officials there attribute the spike to better-equipped space that is also more modern, functional and user-friendly. The Public Library Association says such increases are typical in updated facilities.

But community libraries and research libraries cater to different users. For the latter to serve its constituents, Dr. Horrell said, planners need to design a variety of spaces, including quiet spots where people can work in solitude, collaborative spaces where groups can work together and social spaces as well.

"A variety of micro-environments would be the most successful," he said. "And flexibility of space is important, because things will change quickly and you want to be able to adapt without huge costs."

One Hillman project currently under way is the renovation of the plaza surrounding the building. It had fallen into disrepair, Dr. Pack said, after the upstairs entrance of the library was closed in the 1970s due to handicap access issues. That entrance is now reopened, so the plaza is getting new paving stones, planters and trees.

"It is potentially a very nice space that has not been used for a long time," he said. "We want to bring it back. In an urban university, public spaces are very important."

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IN MEMORIAM

The members of LISSA were shocked and saddened by the news that our fellow student, Micki Blakely, passed away on July 7. She was a student in the Archival Studies program at USC. A memorial gathering was held in her honor on August 5 at Davis College. LISSA offers its collective condolences to the family and friends of Micki Blakely.

SLIS^{ten} Up!

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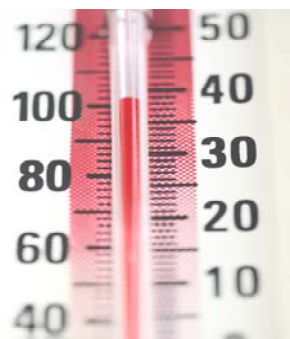
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Director's Corner

By Samantha Hastings



Dear Friends and
Students,

I hope you are somewhere cooler than Columbia, South Carolina! It is actually hotter here than it was in the Everglades! But oh the Everglades were beautiful. So wild and unpredictable. We saw some wonderful critters and sights during our two week adventure. It really is one of the last wild frontiers and I feel refreshed and rejuvenated by its beauty.

Graduation is this weekend and I think



you will remember that it is one of my favorite celebrations. When you complete your degrees and set out to change the world, I have great hope. And again, we have a stellar group of graduates, ready to go forth and be leaders, carrying a culture of service and excellence.

This weekend is also orientations for our new cohort with Virginia and West Virginia. We have about 60 new students and I am looking forward to meeting them and welcoming them to this wonderful adventure in library and information science.

Orientation for Columbia is August 17 and 18. August 17 is an optional evening get together at Davis College. Saturday, August 18 is the required orientation. I look forward to meeting our new South Carolina students then and hope that you can join us to welcome the new students on Friday evening.



Make sure you include this important date on your calendar! The SCASL 2008 Annual Conference, March 12-14, 2008 at the Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center-Power Up @ your library. There is a new hotel and a parking garage, so see you Columbia for spring blooms and a great conference. You still have time to submit a proposal for a presentation by August 15.

Let me know if there is anything you need and remember that this school is all about you!

Yours,
Dr. SAM

