

North Coast Notes

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<http://www.sla.org/chapter/ccle>

What's in a Name?

Who could have known that at the start of the year, there would be 2 name changes in the future of our local SLA chapter? As of this writing, the surveys returned show a majority of members want to change the local chapter name from Cleveland to Northern Ohio in order to create a name that reflects the larger geographic boundaries of the chapter.

Additionally, the SLA Association office is now doing business as SLA rather than the Special Libraries Association. While the association is still legally named Special Libraries Association, all of its official communication will be done as SLA (just the acronym). This was decided by the Association leadership in response to membership feedback and a survey of information industry perceptions. Rest assured, the Association still encompasses the very best of information industry and library practices. It will still focus on the needs of special libraries and promote the interests of its members and it is still an active Association of approximately 12,000 members that strives to meet the needs of its constituents.

Our Association also finalized its new Chapter Guidelines and Recommended Practices for all Association chapters. The new documents will be discussed and modified at our annual business meeting June 2. The two documents were revised with an eye to streamlining the association structure and recognize technology that can enhance chapter management.

I look forward to discussing these changes with you at our business meeting next week. These are exciting times as our profession nimbly adjusts to information industry changes and opportunities.

Finally, I would like to thank you for the opportunity to serve as Cleveland Chapter President this year. It has been an honor to work with so many intelligent and talented individuals. Our Chapter is filled with some truly remarkable professionals who embody the very best of information management. It has been a privilege to serve the Association as President.

Sally B. Fell

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Student Group Focus - Kent State Student Group

Students from SLA's Kent State Student Group organized a four-day tour of Washington, DC, libraries and information centers this month. They also visited SLA Headquarters. This is a group of very excited, enthusiastic, and determined to succeed, future information professionals. They spent nine months organizing this project, paid for it on their own, and plan to go back and get university and local news coverage of this event. They want to gain visibility for SLA at their university and also show the local community (and their future employers) the value of information professionals.

Why Washington? They determined that there are many opportunities in Washington, DC, and wanted to explore them. What better avenue to get an entrée than through an SLA student group. The student group circulated plans for this project to their alumni group and several employed at public libraries took their vacation to come for the tour. They were quite impressed with the opportunities in special libraries. Kent State Student Group President, Dawn Pottinger, will be at Annual Conference as a scholarship winner.

From *May Leadership Connections*

Kent State's SLA Merit Awards

Outstanding Leadership: 1st runner up: Kent State

Innovative Programming: 2nd place: Kent State University

Creative Use of Electronic Resources: 1st place: Rutgers and Kent State Outstanding

Chapter/Division Support: 1st place: Cleveland Chapter

Successful Year for Kent State SLA Student Group

Thank you to all the members of the Cleveland Chapter who helped out with any of the Student Group's activities. Without the support of the professionals in the area, it would be very hard to put on quality activities for students.

For the second year in a row, a Kent State University student was recognized for potential in special libraries. Dawn Pottinger, V.P. of the Student Group, received one of the SLA scholarships. Many of you may recognize her name by now, since she was the blood and tears behind the student trip to Washington D.C. at the end of the Spring semester.

The KSU Office of Campus Life awarded Dawn Pottinger and Jami Miller (Columbus V.P. of the Student Group) each awards for Outstanding Leadership for their efforts in organizing the Washington D.C. and Columbus trips, respectively.

The KSU Student Group was well recognized for its efforts with several SLA Merit Awards. In addition, the Cleveland Chapter was recognized for its support of the library school.

Watch the Cleveland Chapter and KSU SLIS listservs for several summer activities the Student Group is planning for a little rest and relaxation. We are considering a day at a Metropark and a golf outing. Everyone will be invited.

Brian Gray

OCLIS AND CTSC REPORT

Submitted by Jean Z. Piety

OHIO COUNCIL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES (OCLIS)

John and I attended the OCLIS meeting of March 2nd at the State Library of Ohio. Speaker was Doug Evans, Ohio Library Council Executive Director. He outlined the OLC report, Taking the Initiative: The Future of Ohio Public Libraries, and distributed copies of the summary document. He wanted our representatives to be aware of this first comprehensive look at the future of public library service in Ohio. Those of us in OLC received copies in the mail, but I have some extras. The entire report is impressive. Funding is still needed to implement it. I wanted the Chapter to be aware of the study, for the future of Ohio public libraries may affect special libraries also.

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CLEVELAND TECHNICAL SOCIETIES COUNCIL (CTSC)

Of the numerous CTSC Board of Governors meetings John and I attended, two stand out. In August, CTSC holds a collaboration meeting to help societies plan activities and events for the coming term. Networking and sharing ideas are the keys at this meeting. The second event is the Scholarship Awards and Banquet event, May 19th at Landerhaven. Nineteen high school seniors received \$1,000 scholarships. Three professional awards went to Lawrence D. Graham (ASMI) for Distinguished Leadership, to Tony Spring (NSBE) for Technical Achievement, and to Dr. Arthur Huckelbridge, Jr (ASCE) for Technical Educator. Presenters for these awards were John and Jean Piety. In honor of CTSC Executive Director Robert B. Cummings' hard work over the last 27 years, the Council presented him with a gold medallion and renamed an award "The Robert B. Cummings Distinguished Leadership Award."

The CTSC web site links to SLA Cleveland Chapter. Members from the technical societies in the greater Cleveland area are listed on the web site. As the Archivist for the Council, I write the annual "Year in Review." The Chapter participation in the Council started in the late 1960s.

Demonstrating Your Value as an Information Professional

(Excerpts from a class presented March 31, 2004 by Joe Hecht to Dr. Ruth Fenske's KSU Special Libraries class entitled "Marketing & PR for the Special Library / Value of the Information Professional")

Be nice to everybody, as you never know who may be your next interviewer or boss

Demonstrate your value on the job

Show how you help the organization put out its product or service

Take on new assignments when you can; volunteer for committees or task forces which help you get to know needs of other areas of your organization

When you hear or read about an upcoming merger, acquisition, or reorganization, look at it as an opportunity rather than a threat. To a new department head or officer, offer to provide articles on the person's new area of responsibility.

Keep thank-you notes from internal clients; request that oral thank-you notes be written / emailed to you (to forward to current boss, and to save for future use)

- Ask for details: Customer's savings (dollar amt or time, which can be converted to dollars saved to the organization)

Show how you can consolidate accounts, eliminate a middleman, etc. to save employer money

Show how employer can save money in other ways

ROI studies possible (but not always feasible) to show savings

Keep records of key assignments you've done for customers

Keep records of training classes, seminars, presentations you've done for clients or prospective clients

Keep records of continuing education you've attended – especially if on your own time – to show you are serious about professional growth; that it's not "just a job" for you

On a regular basis, show your boss and your management what you do for them. Don't assume they know what you do or that clients depend on you for information to do their jobs.

For the occasional meeting in the hall or elevator with your boss's boss (or other management):

Have ready and orally deliver "elevator-ride" sized nuggets - concise summaries of key accomplishments you've achieved, recent training you've done, how you've made the employer money, saved money or made it look good. In many places of employment, you won't be able to speak regularly with upper management (that is often perceived as stepping on your boss's toes or going around him/her). However, to make sure your message of value is getting passed along by your boss, you should make sure that when the situation arises (the chance meeting), that you are ready with a message of the value of your own services (and your info center).

Join and Be Active in Professional Associations

Join organizations for Information Professionals (such as SLA) and those of the industry you are or want to be part of

Don't just JOIN, but show that you can accomplish things and be a leader OFF the job, so people who are looking to hire will remember you for ON the job responsibilities.

Show how you can do a particular job (plan a meeting, run a committee, interest vendors in sponsorship), recruit members and officers

How we add value - Skill sets include:

- **"Information-handling":** acquiring (item or license to use), cataloging, processing of info and library materials, tracking of above, finding best vendors and price plan for the purpose; analyzing, **evaluating**, dissemin-

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ating the info (reactively and proactively – after being asked and without being asked). Remember that although anyone can surf the Web, **not everyone has the skills to tell whether** a given (Web-based) info source is **authoritative, current, reliable, timely, and the best value for the money.** **Ad-hoc searches AND regular alerts can be set up.**

- **Interpersonal:** interviewing (ad hoc queries and needs assessment (information inventory), training, coaching of customers and fellow staff/ support staff members, helping to “grow” them in their responsibilities
- **Teamworker – collegial efforts:** finding out what our employers’ key goals are, key players, processes, how to get to our goals,

how we can supply info to help attain the goals we’ve identified

- **Technology:** testing, evaluating, and learning new technology to assist in other areas, building and maintaining websites/portals/intranets, setting up “alerts” on key topics
- **Management:** coordinating (processes, schedules, vendor accounts, competing deadlines), supervising (people and processes), leading, delegating, training, budgeting, planning, organizing
- **Change agent:** helping your organization do things differently to achieve its goals; utilize all the above to meet continual challenges, “do more with less”, stay ahead of the competition

Suggestions –

People get hired/ stay employed because they:

Make the employer money

Save the employer money

Make the employer look good

You must show that you do one or (preferably) more of the above.

Make the employer money

- Help identify prospective business partners (customers, suppliers, joint venture partners, acquisition targets, licensing partners), their activities, financial situation, business profile, any problems (legal/regulatory) and other noteworthy items
- Help identify new business practices that can help your organization
- Help identify new technologies that your organization can harness

Save the employer money

- Avoid risk via identifying legal/regulatory/financial problems in prospective business partner before relationship is begun
- Monitor news developments on existing business partners, markets, industry areas to avoid “reinventing the wheel”
- Train employees (those who want to do own research) in effective search techniques, browser tricks & tips, how to tell authoritative sites from others. If you put on a presentation or class, have attendees use evaluation sheets to show whether your presentation improved their knowledge of the subject and/or techniques covered.

Make the employer look good

- Represent your employer in business and professional organizations, including SLA, NORASIST, MLA, etc. and non-library related organizations also. Take an active and/or leadership role in the organization, thereby increasing your exposure and making your employer look good. You may not have a chance to develop leadership skills on the job, and this is a great way to do it. (*Call Sally Fell or Karen Oye (www.sla.org/chapter/ccle to volunteer for a committee.)*

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- Show others outside your organization the value your employer places on obtaining sound information about its products, services, markets, and business practices to the extent that it has a library/info center and pays (we hope) for you to attend continuing education and vendor opportunities to keep current on competitive information-related products, services and techniques.
- Offer (after checking with your boss, of course) to host meetings at your place of work. This will not only show your employer that you value his/her participation in showing the group what your organization does and how it gets its information (you can give a library tour also) but also show (by peoples' attendance) the employer how many other organizations in the area think a special library is critical to their success.

Quantifying and tracking what you do for your customers and employer will help you not only on your current job but help you show prospective customers and employers what you can do for them.

Remember, even though our titles, employers, and information sources may change, the need for our skills will always remain in many organizations. There is just so much information from so many sources, that employers need our skills to handle it all and make sense of it. **We add value in many ways.**

I wish you all the very best in your careers. No matter where you work or what your duties are, **never stop marketing yourself or your Library/ Information Center, and never stop demonstrating your value to your organization!**

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Upcoming OVAL Seminar: Keeping Morale Up When Times Are Down

When: Friday June 18, 2004
From 9:00 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.

Where: Ohio Valley Area Libraries, 252 W. 13th Street, Wellston, Ohio

Speaker: Russ Crabtree, Engineer and Human Developer, Holy Cow! Consulting, Columbus

Description: ALL STAFF of academic, public, school and special libraries are invited to come to OVAL and participate in this workshop!

Global events are impacting local budgets including state allocations to library funding. These changes are forcing libraries to adopt a number of cost saving strategies including cuts in hours, services, resources, and staff. These changes can have a negative impact on morale that in turn threatens to further reduce the quality of transactions with customers. **Keeping Morale Up When Times Are Down** explores the relationship between morale and productivity, the importance of hiring for morale and downsizing with morale in mind, keeping focused on the vision especially when times are tough, why caring for people makes good business sense, and how training can save you money.

Member Fee: \$25.00
Non-Member Fee: \$50.00