

President's Corner

By Susan Fifer Canby, sfiferca@ngs.org

Dear Colleagues:

Local Elections

Now it is time for **you** to vote for your next DC/SLA Board. We have an excellent slate thanks to the work of the Nominating Committee chaired this year by past-president, Sue O'Neill Johnson. Please review the biographical information and photos of the candidates, then vote and return your ballot before March 15, 2004 to P.O. Box 287, Benjamin Franklin Station, Washington, DC 20044.

SLA Leadership Meeting, January 21-24, 2004, Albuquerque, New Mexico

I promised you a report on the meeting in my last message. Several of your officers attended, but this is what I heard:

Awards and Kudos

As you read in the February *Chapter Notes*, five of our own – Anne Caputo, Lyle Minter, Wilda Newman, Kenlee Ray, and Donna Scheeder will be recognized at the national meeting in June 2004. Congratulations to each of you. You've made us proud! The Association election results should be in shortly and we have our fingers crossed for our candidates.

New from the Association

The Association approved the new governing documents and they will be sent within the next two weeks to the Chapters with recommendations on how to institute them. The Association is beginning to plan for the 100th anniversary of the Association and has tasked Guy St. Clair with writing the book. The Chapter Cabinet asked the Board to have the Finance Committee consider alternative payment structures for dues to address the needs of our newest members in particular.

Executive Director

To help focus the re-branding efforts that will follow next year, Executive Director Janice Lachance (Janice@sla.org) is meeting with executives of various companies to hear first-hand how libraries make a difference and add value to their organizations. She said her focus for this year will be:

- **Professional development:** SLA is working with a new web conferencing provider which was featured at the February 4th meeting on Work/Life Balance. She has begun the development of a professional certification program. She reported that SLA is creating a matrix to support learning and to tie competencies to learning.
- **Advocacy:** SLA is reaching out to non-traditional sources to promote our new vision and mission to ensure a unified messaging and branding plan to communicate the new face of SLA.
- **Communication and services:** SLA has simplified the payment process, redesigned the website (<http://www.sla.org>). It is now available in 12 languages and includes a search taxonomy.
- **Networking:** The new Community of Practice page on the SLA website has been added to facilitate best practices and networking. Almost 120 recruiters helped add 700 new members to SLA in the last membership campaign. Eastern Canada, Oregon and others will be recognized at the national conference for their recruiting efforts.
- **Move from Washington:** The new building in Alexandria, Virginia will offer better space for meetings as well as Association business.

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

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EDITOR'S NOTE:

Wednesday, March 17th is the deadline for materials which can be included in the **April 2004** issue. The issue is distributed approximately three weeks after the deadline. The preferred submission format is a Word document sent via email.

Materials for *Chapter Notes* should be sent to the Editor:

Cynthia Holt

The Gelman Library
George Washington University
2130 H Street NW
Washington, DC 20052
Phone: 202-994-1352
Email: holt@gwu.edu

Event announcements should also be submitted electronically to the:

Listserv Moderator:

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Frederik Heller
Phone: 202-383-1157
Email: fheller@realtors.org

Send address changes for *Chapter Notes* to:

SLA Headquarters
ATTN: Address/Name Changes
1700 18th Street NW
Washington, DC 20009-2508

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Grants

The committee for the SLA Endowment Fund is looking for proposals by August 1, 2004, that suggest ideas to benefit our Chapter, or Division or the profession that they can underwrite. Visit the Leadership page of the SLA website.

Stacey Greenwell (staceyg@email.uky.edu), ITE Member Services Chair, is requesting submission by April 9, 2004 for the most inspired cutting-edge and innovative chapter technology programming of 2003-2004. Chapters could win \$500 and be highlighted in the ITE newsletter.

We heard an excellent customer service message from keynote speaker, Ann Rhoades, of JetBlue, who addressed us on "People-Centric Cultures that Pay Big Dividends for Great Companies.

- **People come first.** Find a way to say Yes. Be passionate about the company and its customers. Define our values and priorities. Culture is what people do when no one is looking. Choose staff better than me. What you do for people will result in support of customers.
- **Communicate.** Define behaviors – caring, integrity, fun, passion, safety. Caring can't be faked. **Re-recruit your own staff everyday.** Talk to people, especially "A" players. Be specific about what they do that is great. Find out what turns them. Treat people fairly, not equally – individual treatment – constantly assess the state of your people. People want more than sex and money – they want recognition and praise. Write letters home to them so they can share with their families.
- **Hire "A" players.** Hire fewer, better players. Take ownership of hiring mistakes. Oscar Wilde said, "I have the simplest of tastes. I'm only satisfied with the best." When hiring, ask very specific behavioral questions: When did you break a rule for a customer? Involve your people in recruiting and hiring. Ask what it takes to get them to Yes.
- **Think outside the box.** Fun ads talk to people. Have line people solve problems. Develop a tiger team with no managers. Engage everyone in the solutions.
- **Keep it simple.** Hesitate to make more rules. Empower staff to get to yes. The rest of the staff will notice if we don't mirror our values. Continually exceed expectations. Never lose "A" players – keep track of them; they may come back.
- **Be excessive about service.** You are unique and so are our customers. Get back to the customer; do simple things well and consistently. Recovery is everything; say you're sorry if things mess up; take ownership and call personally.
- **Create a disciplined culture of excellence.** Don't be fooled by your own press. Improve and differentiate your brand: What do we deliver? The brand is US. Do the right thing. Communicate, encourage initiative and innovation and inspire greatness – this is what employees want of managers.

Spring is coming. Hang on. Best, Susan

The H.W. Wilson Company Award

Chapter member **Jill Konieczko**, of the *US News & World Report* Library, and Cynthia Powell, Washington, DC, were recently announced as winners of the H.W. Wilson Company Award from SLA. The award is presented to authors of outstanding articles published in *Information Outlook*®. Konieczko and Powell authored "Information Centers that Innovate," an article published in the January 2003 issue, which focused on the common experiences and situations of different libraries and provided practical and adaptable advice for information professionals in similar organizations. Congratulations Jill and Cynthia!



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Research Tip of the Month: Stalking the Elusive Guru

Submitted by Mary Ellen Bates,
mbates@batesinfo.com

We know about the problems of finding information on the "invisible web" -- that portion of the web that search engines cannot or will not spider. But there is a deeper, truly invisible web of information that will forever exist beyond the scope of search engines -- the knowledge residing in the brains of experts. The web and email enable us to identify those gurus... the people who have in-depth knowledge and who are thought-leaders and influencers.

Unfortunately, web gurus are bombarded with unsolicited email -- not only with the spam and viruses that we all get, but also with an astounding number of requests that go far beyond what is appropriate to ask. As an info-entrepreneur, I am always amazed to get emails that ask me "How much do you make a year? I want to figure out if this is a viable busi-

ness for me, so please tell me your salary." And search engine gurus like Chris Sherman and Danny Sullivan regularly get requests such as "Can you please contact all the major search engines for me and explain to them that what I'm doing isn't spam?" What is particularly annoying is that sending email is so quick and easy, people often send queries to experts with no real expectation of a response. As a result, these experts are deluged with what amounts to semi-spam, making it even more difficult to separate the real questions from the "gee, I wonder if I can get Danny to respond to me?"

As someone who both gets these emails and sometimes needs to tap into the knowledge of experts, I have become more and more mindful of the etiquette involved in querying the elusive guru. So, putting my theory to practice, I queried several web gurus and asked them for their thoughts. What would entice

them to respond to a random email query? Do they even try to respond? What kind of email do they actually enjoy receiving? And here's what I learned.

* First, don't send an email until you have thought through why you are contacting the expert. Is your question something that you could answer yourself by looking at the expert's web page or by doing some simple research yourself? Is your goal to respond to an article the expert wrote? If so, your email is more likely to be answered if you have something thoughtful to say, rather than simply "Hey, you're so right" or "Hey, you really have it all wrong."

* Use an informative subject heading. An email titled "Hi there" or, worse yet, no subject line at all, is likely to get automatically filtered into the spam bucket. On the other hand, a subject line such as

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"thoughts re: image searching", in response to an article on how to conduct web research for pictures, stands a better chance of getting answered, or at least opened.

* Keep it simple. As Danny Sullivan, editor of SearchEngineWatch.com, said, "Chances are, anything with a giant, involved question in multiple parts will just sit there unless I can relate it to a story I'm working on or after I've dealt with all the easy stuff. And as more things come in, the complicated question may get further and further behind. Finally, if it's simply too old, too many days gone by, it's one that's slipped through the net."

* Be polite. Chris Sherman, editor of SearchDay, www.SearchEngineWatch.com/searchday, told me, "I ignore virtually all email from anyone I don't know that demands or assumes a reply. I also ignore any email that presupposes I'm happy to spend time researching a topic or providing a detailed reply without any offer of reciprocity. Bluntly, I'm not a non-profit operation."

All of the experts I queried agreed that flattery, while always nice, doesn't change whether they will respond or not.

* Be thoughtful. Recognize that the expert's time is limited. Include your phone number with your query, on the chance that a phone call is simpler to respond to. Danny Sullivan commented that the reader emails he enjoys getting are those that help him understand something new, which he may then be able to use to help others through a story. Gary Price, editor of ResourceShelf.com, is more likely to answer questions that help test or improve his search skills.

* Don't expect something for nothing. Gary Price described a jaw-dropping request he received: "I'm preparing a marketing plan to open a sporting goods business. I need the following lists by tomorrow afternoon. Thanks." Wow.

* Be patient. As Gary Price noted, "Don't assume that I'm willing and able to answer your question right away, for free." Many web gurus are on the road a

fair amount of the time, on consulting projects or speaking engagements, and often their time online is limited. That means that they return to the office to face a deluge of email, and your query just may not have priority. Chris Sherman made an interesting observation: "I find it ironic that many people who practice good offline time management skills feel guilty about not replying to email. Somehow, email gets an automatic high priority that's simply not justified in the larger scheme of things."

* Finally, don't despair if your email isn't answered at all. As Chris Sherman told me, "I hate to admit this, but I don't answer most email -- even 'top priority' messages that I shouldn't put aside (like from my mom)." In fact, one of the web experts I contacted while writing this article didn't respond to me. It's nothing personal; I assume that she was too busy, didn't feel like tackling my email right now, or that it is in her "gee, I should respond to this" pile. I may be pleasantly surprised with a response in a couple of weeks, and that's OK.

Book Review: *When Generations Collide: Who They Are. Why They Clash. How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work*

Submitted by Cynthia Kahn,
ckahn@aamc.org

Members and guests of the DC Chapter of SLA gathered on Thursday evening, January 22nd, to discuss Lynn Lancaster and David Stillman's book, *When Generations Collide: Who They Are. Why They Clash. How to Solve the Generational Puzzle at Work*

http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/tg/detail/-/0066621070/qid=1075301517/sr=1-1/ref=sr_1_1/102-9372871-4632161?v=glance&s=books. Not only did members agree that the book would be useful in their interactions at work, but one member is planning to give copies of it to board members at her organization. Adding the HR department to that list would be beneficial, too.

Who are the generations?

- **Traditionalists (1900-1945): 75 Million people**
- **Baby Boomers (1946-1964): 80 Million people**
- **Generation Xers (1965-1980): 46 Million people**
- **Millennials (1981-1999): 76 Million people**

Four generations are interacting in today's workplace. You'll not only find yourself in this list, but you will identify your co-workers too. The authors spell out the people, places and things which influence(d) each generation. Traditionalists are *loyal*, for example, having experienced two World Wars and the Great Depression. *Optimistic and competitive* describe baby boomers. This generation grew up in a post-war economy and had many more opportunities than the previ-

ous generation. Generation Xers, on the other hand, are characterized as *skeptical*, having gained a healthy distrust of institutions and relationships. Gen Xers have seen every institution called into question and the divorce rate triple. The newest generation, Millennials, according to the authors, are *realistic* and *collaborative*.

While these keywords are obviously generalities, the authors do effectively make their point. The use of anecdotes throughout the book and provide excellent examples of "clashpoints" – those places where the generations collide. And they do - often - as each generation has different expectations and beliefs. Keeping these differences in mind can help workplace interactions. It can also help with workplace and career planning. The authors discuss every stage of a career, from recruiting to retaining and managing employees to issues important to employers, industries and associations. Before you think this is a marginal topic, take a look at the first few paragraphs of an email I received today:

When I was a kid adults used to bore me to tears with their tedious diatribes about how hard things were when they were growing up; what with walking twenty-five miles to school every morning uphill both ways through year 'round blizzards carrying their younger siblings on their backs to their one-room schoolhouse where they maintained a straight-A average despite their full-time after-school job at the local textile mill where they worked for 35 cents an hour just to help keep their family from starving to death! And I remember promising myself that when I grew up there was no way in hell I was going to lay a bunch of crap like that on kids about how hard I had it and how easy they've got it!

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Katherine Blauer's Vision for OCLC CAPCON

Submitted by Susan Randolph,
psard@comcast.net



The Washington, DC-based CAPCON Library Network became the OCLC CAPCON Service Center on November 12, 2003, when OCLC finalized the purchase of CAPCON's business assets. The CAPCON board and membership approved the acquisition in order to ensure a financially healthy future for the network, after considering other options that included mergers with SOLINET and PALINET.

Katherine Blauer is OCLC CAPCON's new executive director. Before assuming this position, Ms. Blauer was president of Gaylord Information Systems, where she was responsible for all aspects of the Polaris and GALAXY library automation systems. From 1997-1999 she was Vice President of Sales for Information Access Company. Ms. Blauer served as a librarian in academic, public, and special libraries in the United Kingdom and the United States from 1965-1985, and then spent 12 years in a variety of positions at OCLC.

Ms. Blauer's extensive background as a librarian and vendor of information systems informs her vision of the future of the OCLC CAPCON Service Center. OCLC CAPCON will develop new solutions as well as draw on existing solutions to meet member needs, according to Ms. Blauer. Partnering, a concept she

used successfully at Gaylord Information Systems, is an important part of this proactive approach. As an example of effective partnering, Ms. Blauer cites OCLC's OpenWorldCat, an OCLC/Google partnership, the result of which is to direct users of the Google search engine to libraries as well as booksellers for relevant materials. Ms. Blauer will draw on her experience as a librarian to communicate member needs to vendors and as a vendor to connect members to vendors with good ideas. Through effective partnering, she believes that OCLC CAPCON will be able to develop pilot projects that can eventually be launched as mainstream solutions.

Focusing on operational excellence will reenergize the service provided by OCLC CAPCON, Ms. Blauer believes. The network will continue to provide training, support, customized billing services, and cooperative purchasing for a wide range of services and products from both OCLC and other service providers. In addition, Ms. Blauer would like to help OCLC CAPCON members provide service to their users more efficiently. She believes that OCLC CAPCON can play a role, for example, in making each member's customized collection and dissemination of news more efficient.

Ms. Blauer also wants OCLC CAPCON to be more responsive to serving the particular information needs of its members. She would like to expand the service center's offerings based on a wish list of services and content that reflects the unique needs and patterns of usage of the four library types that make up the membership: public, academic, special, and school. By using formal surveys and focus groups organized by library type, Ms. Blauer hopes to elicit a response to the statement "I wish OCLC CAPCON would..." from each membership segment.

Through the informal meetings she is currently conducting, Ms. Blauer hopes to learn about each member's mission, its success stories, its biggest problem, and the barriers it encounters in serving

its constituency. She will draw on the broad expertise of the OCLC CAPCON Advisory Council (formerly the CAPCON Board of Trustees) for advice on issues that affect the entire membership. She plans to create informal user groups, however, to provide advice on service to segments of the membership.

Ms. Blauer plans to use digital technology to create a more vibrant presence for OCLC CAPCON's training program. OCLC CAPCON will offer a continuum of training that will include "Webinars," in-house workshops, and conferences that draw on the rich information and technology resources of the greater Washington area. Ms. Blauer believes that the benefits of co-registration make training partnerships especially successful. In December, OCLC CAPCON and the Federal Library and Information Center Committee jointly sponsored a workshop on digitization and preservation. Ms. Blauer plans to initiate training partnerships with other local organizations such as the DC/SLA and the DC Library Association.

In February, OCLC CAPCON launched enhancements to its Web site, including a feature to facilitate membership feedback. In March, it will begin to enhance content. Ms. Blauer wants the Web site to serve as a clearinghouse for current information on technology and as a tool for connecting members with the leading experts on topics of membership concern. She is enthusiastic about the updated Web site, which she believes will raise OCLC CAPCON's profile and facilitate efforts to expand its membership. She also hopes the Website will help members find commonality. Developing community is an important part of her vision for the OCLC CAPCON Service Center.

DC/SLA Mentoring Program

*Submitted by Cassandra Harper,
cassharper@aol.com*

Consider participating in the DC/SLA mentoring program. Everyone gains from mentoring. It does not matter what stage you are in your career.

Whether you are new to the profession or an experienced professional, it is an excellent opportunity to learn what new trends and challenges affect our profession.

You can build networks within the profession. As a mentee, you can gain insight into the profession that you may not have learned in the classroom. Serving as a mentor can provide satisfaction, as you reflect on the growth of your career and watch other careers develop.

If interested please contact Committee Co-Chairs, Cassandra Harper (202-566-1735, cassharper@aol.com) or Mykie Howard (202-994-1321, mhowa3@gwu.edu).

Welcome New Members!

Submitted by Jill Konieczko, jkonieczko@usnews.com

Please welcome the following new members to DC/SLA:

Louis Abramovitz, Travel Industry Association of America
Kristin Anderson, Library of Congress/ASCD Technology I Team
Maureen Clements, National Public Library
Cliff Cohen, Library of Congress/Congressional Research Services
Theodore Doubek, Student
Christine Dulaney, Library of Congress/Congressional Research Services
Catherine Earles, US Bureau of Census Library
Shelly Edwards, OCLC
Patricia Evans, Supreme Court of the United States
Mary Fry, Center for Strategic & International Studies
Erica Gray, American Society of Association Executives
Anne Gwynn, Library of Congress/Congressional Research Services
Una Hildebrandt, Booz Allen Hamilton
Katherine Lang, student
Vrae McNeil, AARP
Anne-Marie Meegan, Student
Wilbur Rettenmaier, Naval Research Laboratory
Rosemary Russo
Kari Schmidt, Student
Craig Schulin, Innovative Emergency Management
Marlies Shipman
Ruth Van Laningham, Middle East Institute
Derek Willis, Center for Public Integrity
Gloria Zamora, Sandia National Laboratories