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President's Report

Why Membership is Important

by Marty Cullen, President

For any association that wants to attract and retain members they must offer compelling reasons as to why they are the place to belong. In my just-completed role as President-Elect I got to work closely with the members of the New York Chapter in planning Chapter programs. What I have heard loud and clear is that you want good programs combined with good networking opportunities. You also asked for Professional Development workshops.

To ensure that we stay on track to accomplish this we have the following examples:

- ▲ A new Director of Professional Development position who will sit on the Executive Board.
- ▲ Stimulating programs that are now being planned for 2001-2002 by our new President-Elect, **Bethann Ashfield**.
- ▲ More membership perks — stay tuned for announcements in the Fall.
- ▲ Regularly scheduled Lunches in Midtown & Downtown.
- ▲ Retooled Web presence that keeps us virtually informed. Featuring:
 - ◆ An electronic copy of *ChapterNews* in .pdf format and an alternative text-only format on the Web site and e-mailed.
 - ◆ Powerpoint & Multimedia presentations of the Chapter programs.
 - ◆ Listings for continuing education programs for members.
 - ◆ An archive of *ChapterNews*.
 - ◆ A photo archive.
 - ◆ A revamped Resources page.
 - ◆ Job postings.

During my recent trip to the SLA Annual Meeting I was struck by what a diverse and dynamic organization we are. The diversity gives us great synergy and strength. Where else, other than SLA, can information professionals from all walks of life and institutions meet and share information?

Special Libraries have become a more integral part of the institutions we serve. Information has become more critical and so have our responsibilities.

Let's spread the word that SLA is the place to be for anyone who works in the information field.

I look forward to hearing from you and working with you.

PUBLICATION SCHEDULE

ChapterNews, the bulletin of the New York Chapter of the Special Libraries Association, is published four times a year.

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Fall issueAugust 15
Winter issue.....November 15
Spring issue.....February 15
Summer issue.....May 15

Submit all material to:

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Submissions: Articles on topics of general interest to information professionals and the New York Chapter are welcome. Authors can send submissions via email as text file or MS Word for Windows attachments, or with article in the body of the email. Please use single-line spacing, Courier font, with minimal use of boldface and italics. Include a byline with your full name and place of work.

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Advertising Manager Laura Kapnick

Chapter Services

Membership in the New York Chapter provides so many benefits, it might be beneficial to remind everyone of some of the Chapter's services:

SLA-NY web site: <http://www.sla.org/chapter/cny>

Job Hotline: telephone (212) 439-7290

SLA New York Chapter Listserv: to subscribe to SLA-CNY, send a message to lists@lists.sla.org

Chapter and Division meetings. Watch for announcements on the Chapter's web site, listserv, through snail-mail and in *ChapterNews*. The season kicks off in the fall and will include something for everyone!

Chapter Christmas Party. The kick-off for the holiday season. An absolute must for all Chapter members!

Career Day. This event, held in the Spring, gets bigger and better every year. Characterized as a "one-stop career shopping" event it's a great way to learn about new jobs, talk to library students just entering the field and examine new career options.

This is just the "short list." Membership in the New York Chapter helps us stay in touch, stay active, stay informed.

ChapterNews: Moving to E-Distribution

There's a milestone taking place, and the evidence of it is the paper you're now reading! Beginning with the Fall 2001 issue, *ChapterNews* is no longer going to be printed and mailed to members. The Executive Board, after several years of discussion, debate and concern, has come up with a better way of delivering Chapter information to members.

All future issues will be available in .pdf format on the Chapter's web site, <http://www.sla.org/chapter/cny>. In addition, issues will also be available in machine readable text format that can be used without Adobe Acrobat.

As soon as *ChapterNews* has been loaded onto the web site, chapter members will receive an e-mail indicating that the latest news is available. The Chapter is receiving its list of e-mail addresses from SLA. If you have not supplied your e-mail address to SLA it is important that you do so ASAP.

New York Chapter's Annual Business Meeting and Spring Reception

by *Martha Schweitzer*

On May 15th, the New York Chapter held its Annual Business Meeting followed by a Spring Reception at the 3 West Club in New York City. The business meeting took place in the Grand Salon of the Club, and it began with the announcements of the winners of the Chapter's grants and awards. This year, the Scholarships for the Annual Conference in San Antonio were given to **Margaret A. Smith, Jill Sutton and Lois Weinstein**. The Chapter awarded the library school tuition scholarships to **Thanh Nguyen** as Diversity Leadership Scholar and to **Jeff Barton, Barbara Flanagan and Colette Politzer** as the winners of the Donna Conti scholarships. The President's Recognition Awards were presented to **Steven Johnson** for his contribution as Chapter Secretary and to **Cassandra Morrow** for her contribution as the Chapter's Treasurer. **Julie Mae Stanley** was recognized for her work on the redesign of the Chapter's website, as was Lois Weinstein for her work organizing Career Day. Lois accepted the award on behalf of all the volunteers who made this year's Career Day a great success. The Distinguished Service Award went to **Charles Finnerty** for his efforts over many years in guiding and helping with the program planning for the Chapter's Business and Finance Group.



The SLA New York Chapter maintains a web site with links to our calendar of upcoming events and full contact information for Chapter Executive Board members, committee officers, and group chairs. The New York Chapter URL is: www.sla.org/chapter/cny/ Check it out — it's a great way to keep up-to-date with your Chapter!

Nettie Seaberry presented the slate of new officers for the Executive Board. The many Chapter members in attendance approved the slate, with applause. The new officers are **Bethann Ashfield** as President Elect, **Dorothy Nelsen-Gille** as Secretary, **Sarah Warner** as Treasurer and **Thomas Pellizzi** as Director of Publications. **Martha Schweitzer** then addressed the meeting as the new Past President outlining the achievements of the past year and presenting the projects to be continued in the next year. **Martin Cullen** as President then presented his plans for the Chapter and emphasized that involving members in the activities of the Chapter and increasing the membership roll would be his priority.

A Spring Reception followed the business meeting and was held in the Club's Ballroom. Members enjoyed seeing friends and colleagues as well as meeting new ones; the invitation to this Reception was also extended to the leadership of other library associations in the New York area, as well as to the public relations directors for the local public library systems. The reason for including other members of the library community was to give them the opportunity to hear the presentation given by at the Reception by **Fred Cerullo**, the President and CEO of the Grand Central Partnership, who spoke on the plans for Library Way. He gave the background for the plan to transform East 41st Street, between Fifth and Park Avenues, into a gracious promenade with retail establishments having cultural connections to libraries. One element of this plan is to install brass plaques with quotes from great literature in the sidewalks along Library Way, and he noted that there should be one hundred of these plaques in place by the end of the summer. At one point in his talk, Mr. Cerullo acknowledged the sponsor for both events, LEXIS-NEXIS, and drew a few chuckles when he noted that he was indebted to the LEXIS-NEXIS services as they were a big help to him as he went through law school. The Chapter appreciates the generous support of LEXIS-NEXIS in sponsoring these meetings.

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Did You Hear the One about the Librarian?

by Sandra Kitt

The title is, of course, making reference to jokes, riddles and limericks that satirize librarians or libraries. I can't recall (with some relief) having heard any in all my years as professional. But that doesn't mean that some clever comedic talent couldn't come up with something both clever and funny. That did not happen, however, with either of the two keynote speakers, Molly Ivins and Dave Barry, who addressed the general sessions at the 92nd Annual SLA Convention, held in San Antonio in June.

It was inspired that the two nationally syndicated writers were invited to speak by the conference planning committee. I don't think anyone in the audience honestly expected either Ivins or Barry to actually address issues of information science, librarians, or the industry in the 21st Century. What the two did (brilliantly) was to make us laugh.

This year especially, it seemed fitting that the business proceedings of the conference interjected levity, which helped to offset the somber announcement of the retirement of SLA's Executive Director, **David R. Bender**, after some 22 years.

Monday's keynote address was given by Molly Ivins, who was introduced by Bill Purdue, the CEO of LEXIS-NEXIS as "a virulent and outspoken advocate of the First Amendment." Ms. Ivins, however, refers to herself as simply "an observer of the American political system." She opened by telling the audience that her first job was in the library of a newspaper. There she learned a lot about how to find information and where to file it.

Ivins told several lengthy anecdotes to illustrate the sometimes silly and self-righteous battles that are fought in the name of decency. Such arguments, she points out, frequently begin against free speech and creative expression. And it was inevitable that the columnist would get around to President Bush, giving the impression that she is less than pleased that he will be leading the nation for the next three and a half years.

"He's not actively dumb," Ivins told us. "He just doesn't speak English well...[and] he has a somewhat limited world view." About the President she concluded, "what you get is all you get." One of the possible outcomes of Bush's presidency, as she sees it, is that real damage can be done to knowledge because money is being cut for research and because Bush's Cabinet is "filled with corporate people and nothing else." In contrast to the Presi-

dent, Molly Ivins had warm and sincere praise for Laura Bush and suggested that it might be a good idea to make the President's wife an advocate for librarians and SLA.

By contrast, Wednesday's keynote speaker, Dave Barry, made only a passing attempt to connect his presentation to the audience except to say about information "we have way too much of it." He was referring more specifically to the deluge of data available over the Internet. He admitted to being technologically challenged and added that thanks to the Internet he's now wasting time faster than ever. He introduced the librarian for the *Miami Herald*, for whom he writes, and stated that he makes frequent use of the library at the paper to fact-check his articles. Barry said he gets berated by readers who apparently don't like/understand/trust his skewered observations, proving that they just don't get it or they take him far too seriously, much to his amazement.

He seemed genuinely surprised at how small the Alamo is. Which led him to also wonder why a handful of men fought so hard to keep it. "Why didn't they just take it with them?" Barry offered the city of Miami as a great venue for a future conference while also warning against two significant draw backs to the location: hurricanes and local politics ("how about those elections..."). In the same way that Molly Ivins explores American politics, Dave Barry can be said to observe with a keen but jaundiced eye the common everyday foibles of life in America. A Pulitzer Prize-winning writer, Barry's focus runs the gamut from raising kids, to turning 50 (he is a very boyish 54), to Neil Diamond, to male-female relationships. For example, he has conceded that "women are better and stronger" but should lower their standards where men are concerned.

Not surprisingly, Barry also had a few things to say about President Bush who, during the SLA conference, was on his first (literary) European trip. "He's going to show them the globe... and possibly explain why the countries on the bottom don't fall off."

Dave Barry was irreverent, and an awful lot of fun to listen for the pure entertainment value. He clocked in at a brisk two or three belly laughs a minute. By the time he left the stage my mascara was ruined.

Sandra Kitt, Library Specialist in astronomy and astrophysics for the Richard S. Perkin Collection at the American Museum of Natural History in New York

2001: An Information Odyssey A Conference Report for *ChapterNews*

by Steve Johnson, sjohnson@westnet.com

“Seizing the Competitive Advantage” was the official subtitle of SLA’s 92nd Annual conference, held in San Antonio from June 9th-14th.

“Content management” and “database driven” were two hot words at SLA’s recent annual conference in San Antonio. But for me, the hottest part of the conference was networking, as it is at every SLA conference.

Every time I sat down to eat a meal, it seemed that I was meeting someone new — a business librarian from Chicago, a Microsoft librarian from North Carolina — or meeting an online acquaintance in person for the first time, in this case **Sharon Levy**, the librarian of the National Wildlife Federation. At San Antonio, quite by chance, we sat down across a table from one another on a dinner cruise of the Riverwalk canals.

Most SLA conference attendees seem to meet new people at any and every opportunity, whether the occasion is breakfast, lunch or standing in line at Sack Sitters at the end of the conference. Many attendees kept their convention badges in sight as they moved between convention sites and their hotel, quite unlike the situation in New York when people leaving meetings remove identification badges before hitting the street.

Monday morning saw a packed house when newspaper columnist Molly Ivins addressed the General Session of the Annual Conference. Her strong positions on intellectual freedom and the first amendment seemed more oriented to academic and public librarians than to corporate and other special librarians. The SLA audience received her enthusiastically.

Electronic journals, from management of URLs to the associated cancellation of print journals, were the subject of a Sci-Tech Division session which drew an overflow crowd. I was glad to find squatting room and sorry the session was not tape-recorded.

Amid all the “e” and web-oriented programming, I was pleased to see, and find seats in, several talks bearing on that perennial subject, the special library online catalog. The librarian and archivist of the Pew Charitable Trust

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described Tally Ho!, Pew's implementation of Sirsi's Unicorn Library system and Hyperion document system for a collection of print monographs and a collection of internal reports scanned to PDF. Although most special libraries cannot draw on the resources of the Pew Charitable Trust, the concepts and even many aspects of implementation may be applied in far less expensive systems.

Several of those lower end systems were discussed and, to a limited extent, demonstrated later in the week, in a session featuring the CEOs of Inmagic, Caspr, and OnPoint, Inc. I believe I was the only member of that audience who presently uses Caspr software for an OPAC and Inmagic dbtextworks for archives and special indexes. I found it noteworthy that both Phillip Green of Inmagic and Norman Kline of Caspr focused on their new, Internet-enabled or Internet-based features.

Early Monday evening I was pleased to encounter **Martha Schweitzer** and **Marty Cullen** greeting guests just inside the door of the New York reception, held in conjunction with the Connecticut and upstate New York chapters. Later, SLA members, including New York chapter members, toured the nearby Hertzberg Circus Museum, a branch of the San Antonio Public Library. One of several circus museums and libraries in the United States, the collections of the Hertzberg Circus Museum include models of circuses, posters, and video in addition to 12,000 volumes collected by the library's founder, a circus fan. I sensed that several of the SLA members saw the book collection, as yet unrepresented in an online catalog, as a retrospective conversion challenge they would happily tackle.

Although some vendors are said to have skipped the San Antonio conference because of the location or due to last minute problems with flights routed through flooded Dallas, I found the exhibit hall as substantial as ever. Visiting potential and current vendors, from LEXIS-NEXIS and Westlaw to Spacesaver, was one of the information-rich highlights of the conference for me. Another plus was accumulating URLs at presentations of particular interest.

Have you ever seen a standing room only crowd at the business meeting of a library conference? That was the case on Wednesday morning, when SLA said goodbye to **David Bender** as Executive Director. Members may have come to see Dave Barry, featured speaker of the business meeting. But to see Dave, they sat and stood and spread out on the floor and listened to David Bender speak, and **Donna Scheeder**, **Hope Tillman**, and the SLA office staff say good-bye to David.

San Antonio was my fifth SLA annual conference in six years. I have never regretted attending an SLA conference, something I can't say about other, unnamed conferences I've attended in the past twenty years.

See you next year at SLA in Los Angeles!

New York Chapter: 2001-2002 Executive Board

The Chapter's Executive Board for 2001-2002 is:

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e-mail: mcullen1@lehman.com

President-Elect

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e-mail: bashfield@nyse.com

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San Antonio Sites: The Alamo

by Sandra Kitt

The theme song from the 1960's movie "The Alamo" starring John Wayne, refers to what happened in 1836 at this old Spanish mission as "thirteen days of glory at the siege of the Alamo." Of course the movie made it seem bigger than life, and the courage of the men, women and children barricaded inside against insurmountable odds as heroic. However, upon seeing The Alamo for the first time, as librarians attending the 92nd Annual SLA Convention did in June, most of us were struck with how small the mission really is.

Constructed of limestone, which is prevalent in the region, the mission fort consists of only a few small interior rooms. In 1836 the Alamo occupied the grounds and buildings of former Mission San Antonio de Valero, used as a military post since the early 1800's. On the day I visited, the sunny outside temperature was a scorching 98 degrees. The stonework of the building made it 15 degrees cooler inside. One room contains a detailed to-scale model of what the Alamo mission looked like whole, along with the layout of the compound surrounding it.

There is a small plaque outside the entrance to the Alamo which reads, "Be silent, friends. Here heroes died to blaze a trail for other men." Visitors are asked to speak very quietly, in reverence of what the site stands for – a final stand for freedom and independence. One hundred and eighty nine men died, outnumbered by nearly one thousand soldiers under a Mexican military leader named Santa Ana.

After the battle the fort was used by Confederate Soldiers and eventually fell into disrepair and ruin. The inside walls are heavy scarred with the initials and dates of soldiers passing through. People actually continued to carve their names as late as the 1970's, when more steps were taken to preserve the building. More than a year ago, traces of what appeared to be frescoes were discovered by site curators and staff. Daughters of the Republic of Texas contracted with a restoration company to identify, document and stabilize the remnants, and make whatever conservation efforts that were needed. The frescoed walls are now behind protective plexiglas, with proper caption information to describe the details of the art. Outside of what remains of the mission site the grounds are manicured with grass and walkways leading to other structures with more information.

While visitors get a good sense of the conditions and odds against a few hundred holdouts in a desperate fight,



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the immediate evidence of contemporary San Antonio by way of Pizza Hut and a tourist trolley depot intrudes. Nonetheless, the Alamo will forever remain "hallowed ground and the Shrine of Texas Liberty."

Sandra Kitt, Library Specialist in astronomy and astrophysics for the Richard S. Perkin Collection at the American Museum of Natural History in New York

Featured Library: British Information Services

by Leslie Slocum

A big patch of Britain in the Big Apple! Come through the doors of British Information Services and you're transported to another country — you are now on British soil! Our computers are different, the spell-checks say programme instead of program, our news briefs come from the BBC, our e-mail flies to London before we can read it in New York.

Working in Britain while living in New York might sound like a gigantic transatlantic commute, but it's all in a day's work at the British Information Services (BIS) Library. We answer questions from Americans about all aspects of the UK and are part of the UK's public diplomacy effort in the United States.

Want to bring your dog to the UK? Get married in the UK? Find out about British politics? Learn about e-government, the euro or the environment? Want articles from British newspapers or magazines? Advice on British web sites, government policies or British elections? Have I got a place for you!

BIS was founded over fifty years ago and continues to be part of the "special relationship" that exists between the United States and Britain. Our information services consists of a radio/TV department, press department, a library, where four information specialists are here to assist and advise, as well as an extremely active web site: www.britainusa.com. Between these resources, we can provide you with "everything you need to know about Britain."

Among the upcoming developments is an extensive FAQ section on the BritainUSA web site. Driven by questions received by the BIS librarians, and with information and web sites provided by the library team, a large FAQ section will soon go live. Need help with VAT? Want to know the difference between Britain and the United Kingdom? Need help with history, genealogy, British traditions, ethnic groups, the monarchy, the Commonwealth or statistics? FAQ BRITAIN will be a great one-stop resource.

The BIS Library provides information to corporations, libraries, non-profits, individuals, the media, etc. We can be reached at (212) 745-0277. Our e-mail address is Public.Enquiries@newyork.mail.fc.gov.uk. Or make an appointment to come in and see us some time. Our patch of Britain is at 845 Third Avenue (between 51st and 52nd Street).

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2001
Donna Conti Scholarship
Essay

Managing Technology: Infinite Riches in a Little Room?

by Jeffrey P. Barton

“infinite riches in a little room...”
— Christopher Marlowe

The idea of “infinite riches in a little room” — an apparent contradiction in terms — is in a sense the promise of the information age. Most of us would say that information and knowledge are a kind of riches. Armed with a modem and online access and using online technology, today’s information seekers are promised almost unlimited troves of information without leaving their own little rooms, wherever they may be. For the most part, this promise is being met to an increasing degree. A few years ago, for instance, you could find a little information about Marlowe or Microsoft on the Internet. Now you can read the full text of all Marlowe’s plays in an interactive format that’s visually appealing (along with all sorts of background information), as well as find up-to-the minute Microsoft stock quotes, detailed information about corporate performance and pending litigation, and multimedia clips of interviews with Bill Gates. This same seems to be true for the other types of information that libraries deal with. All this thanks to the ongoing work of people who manage electronic information in its many formats and those — like special librarians — who help others actually find all this information and make sense of it.

“As the amount of information grows, so does the challenge of providing information to those who need it. No group is more aware of this than librarians,” notes Richard Rubin (Foundations of Library & Information Science). As the information revolution continues, I think the challenge for information managers and special librarians will not be so much finding a source of information as it will be coping with a veritable information avalanche — and then figuring out ways to organize

information effectively for people who need to use it, whatever their information requirements. After all, special librarians are usually expected to find the information and answer the question for information-seeking patrons, not merely point them in the right direction or suggest some search resources. Helping users more actively evaluate electronic information sources is just one aspect of the new role for librarians generally these days, but this “information-mediation” role is one that special librarians are quite familiar with, and it seems likely to become increasingly significant — and potentially more valued — in the next five years.

Technology: Challenge & Solution

The challenge of technology for special librarians is of course fundamentally similar to the challenge it poses for all librarians, but it has specific aspects due to the very nature of special librarianship and the part of the information universe in which special librarians operate. It certainly seems safe to say that technology will have an ever-increasing role in libraries and in the way that special librarians grapple with the “information explosion” in the coming years. Technology is thus both part of the problem and part of the solution for librarians and information-seekers. It has provided both revolutionary tools for managing information and major challenges for librarians and information managers in the recent past, and this trend certainly seems likely to continue. In the last ten years or so, computer technology has radically altered the way that organizations do business and deal with information. Computers “generate enormous quantities of records” that must somehow be managed, and electronic records pose special problems for information managers, but computers also “provide new ways of solving records management problems,” as Mary Robek notes (Information & Records Management). More and more information is being assembled in databases, dumped online, or published in print format which then must be indexed via electronic resources. New search tools and capabilities are always being developed — sometimes, it seems, on a daily basis — to help manage all this information and make it useful to end-users.

So information managers and special librarians must first understand enough about computer technology, its terminology, and how it works to comprehend both the challenges and the potential solutions that technology offers if they are to operate effectively in technology-rich organizations and be taken seriously by IT departments and management professionals when discussing information-management issues and solutions. Understanding technological changes, the “complex and increasingly

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diverse set of tools” they bring, and the “constantly changing terrain of new [information management] products” (*Information Management Journal*, July 2000) that these changes bring looms as an ongoing challenge for information managers and special librarians if they are “merely” to perform tasks like evaluating software, databases, and online resources. Mastering the steep technology learning curve to the point of assuming a leading role in strategic planning of their organizations’ information management will be an even greater challenge. And the pace of technological change should, if anything, continue to accelerate in view of factors like the ongoing exponential increase in computer horsepower forecast by “Moore’s Law,” making this learning process an increasingly demanding one in the years to come.

The world of online information — the Internet, intranets, and e-mail — poses an even more recent and perhaps even greater challenge for information seekers, information managers, and special librarians alike — and one whose ultimate impact is even harder to foresee. Ten years ago the Internet barely existed, so who can say what to expect in the next five to ten years? (Especially considering the “dog years” by which Internet activity seems to be measured — in one year, seven years’ worth of events seem to occur.) Will software purchases be replaced by ongoing online licenses, as Microsoft foresees? It’s hard to say. But it seems safe to predict that today’s cutting edge technology will be superseded by some other newly-emerged technologies in the next five to ten years. One of the few things we can say with some certainty is that the world of online information will keep changing and evolving in ways that will keep changing the role special librarians play if they hope to play a significant part in managing electronic information — and who doesn’t?

Everyone in an organization is a stake-holder in the organization’s information resources, but who will ultimately determine how these are managed? Librarians? IT personnel? Directors of technology? Corporate CIOs? Professional managers? Librarians generally assert a clear desire not to be relegated to essentially a support-role that has been labeled “information technician,” but will they ever be able to position themselves as what one writer termed “architects of information policy”? This seems likely to depend on their ongoing ability to manage change and embrace what may well be a very different role than the one they’re used to.

A New Role for Librarians?

Recent developments in the world of information and information technology have generally worked to undercut the librarian’s traditional focus on bibliographic holdings (as opposed to providing access to information) and even on the library itself. Some writers predict that special librarians will have to strive to define a broader functional role for themselves within their organizations, one that looks beyond the library or information center to organization-wide information needs. Otherwise there’s a real danger that librarians could become viewed as almost throwbacks to another era, people dealing with tangible information in fixed formats, tied to the specific locale of their libraries in a world of electronic information and on-demand access to it from virtually anywhere that there’s a phone line or network connection.

(Continues on page 13)



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Part of the challenge for librarians will entail cultivating a mindset that is perhaps a bit different from their “traditional” orientation: one focusing on access to information — and even knowledge creation — rather than custodianship of bibliographic resources. Part of the challenge will require countering prevalent stereotypes about librarians: for instance, the view that librarians are “particularly concerned with preserving information, and are therefore less likely to enhance effective use of current information.” According to this view, librarians are too passive; they focus too much on preservation; they “index, catalog...[but] don’t synthesize or restructure” information (Information Ecology, Davenport & Prusak).

And part of the challenge for librarians will be to acquire new skills. What sort of skills? Along with the technological skills already discussed, others often mentioned are: a broader “management perspective,” general management skills like strategic planning and project management, the ability to manage people effectively, and written and verbal communication skills. So the very manner in which special librarians are trained and given professional development opportunities seems likely to be subject to change in the light of current changes in the broader information environment in which they function.

And just having all these skills won’t be enough, it seems. According to many writers, librarians will have to campaign actively within organizations to justify their seat at the information management table. Instead of focusing on the library as the locus of their work, they’ll have to focus outward on the larger organization in which they work. Librarians will have to convince management that they have something to offer not only in terms of information management skills but also in terms of attitudes typifying a “breed of proactive and can-do people who relate more strongly to opportunities than performing functions” (IMJ). They will also have to actively seek out and cultivate what one writer termed information “allies” or “partners” within their organizations among IT departments and computer groups to stress their common areas of interest. Davenport & Prusak add that information managers may have to adopt something of a “push strategy” for the information they manage; instead of waiting for users to seek out information — a “pull” strategy — information managers could instead disseminate it to the relevant people on an ongoing basis. This certainly seems like a possibility for special librarians too. Information filtering technology, e-mail, corporate intranets, and portals make this push tactic a real possibility now, and it seems only likely that these tools will improve in the next decade and that other, perhaps even better technologies will emerge.



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In short, while precise nature of the role that special librarians will play in the coming years is hard to predict, most commentators agree that the library profession will continue to change. Flux has become a constant in the library world, just as it has in the world of information. Whether there will be some sort of “convergence” of the various information management roles that will include librarians, whether librarians will emerge with some newly defined, broader role, or whether they will wind up with a distinctly secondary, essentially custodial role for “old” knowledge remains to be seen. Managing change will be challenging for special librarians, to say the least, but the stakes are high for them, and the potential rewards great.

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Librarian as A Heroine

Author and New York Chapter Past President **Sandra Kitt** has announced the August release of her 21st novel, *She's the One* from Signet Books.

Known for her emotionally rich stories, the author has made the lead female protagonist in her latest book a librarian after years of being asked why she hadn't done so in earlier books. "It just never occurred to me, although I did once make a heroine an antiquarian book restorer."

She's the One is the story of a single professional black woman, Deanna Lindsay, who finds herself named the guardian of a little girl. Deanna is not prepared to become an instant mother, and her life is turned upside down in her efforts to try. Further complicating this new responsibility is Deanna's awareness that a member of her library staff may be taking advantage of her distraction to sabotage Deanna's position. The male lead in the story, Patterson Temple, is a fireman who, the author says, allows her to explore the issues of class differences.

Sandra's work has been praised by *Library Journal*, *USA Today*, and she's been on the Black Board Bestseller list in *Essence Magazine*. A short story included in *Girlfriends*, an anthology from HarperCollins, was nominated for the prestigious NAACP Image Award for Fiction in 1999.

Sandra Kitt is the Library Specialist in astronomy and astrophysics for the Richard S. Perkin Collection at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

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