

President's Letter

Gerry Lukos
Summer, 2000

During the years I served as co-editor of the Oregonized Librarian, the old paper edition of our chapter newsletter, I got used to the rhythm of the SLA year. Just as the shorter days signal the coming change of seasons, the new president's first letter to the membership marked the beginning of a new year for our professional association. And now I find myself writing one of those "first" letters – and looking forward to a new year of programs, networking and challenges.

The Oregon Chapter of SLA has already been busy plotting out the year. One Saturday in July, members of the Board, Team Leads and interested members who were able to make the time gathered in a spacious conference room at PSU for a few hours to outline a series of programs for the coming year. But before I preview the calendar of events, let's take a little detour to SLA headquarters for an update of some goings-on that are intended to have an impact on the direction of your association – and that offer you an opportunity to be heard.

The SLA board has appointed five task forces to look at certain aspects of the association and to come back with recommendations for action. All members are encouraged to submit comments.

- **The Task Force on Branding** is considering – among other things – whether SLA should change its name.
- **The Task Force on Conference Planning Structure**, as its name implies, is looking at how SLA pulls conferences together.
- **The Task Force on Partnerships** is suggesting ideas for creating strategic partnerships with other organizations.
- **The Task Force on Membership** is examining the concept of a virtual membership category and is designing a "cafeteria" plan for choosing member services.
- **The Task Force on Simplification of Association and Unit Structure** (which, ironically, has a pretty complex name) is going to recommend ways to simplify SLA structure and eliminate unnecessary administrative tasks.
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If any of these topics rings a bell for you, take a few minutes to jot down your ideas and send them to the task force. The names of the task force members, their email links can be found on the SLA web site at <http://www.sla.org/assoc/comm/taskforce.html>.

So ... back to the ORSLA calendar of programs.

The Task Force on Partnerships discussion at this summer's SLA conference got me thinking about how the Oregon Chapter can enhance our programming and networking by teaming with other organizations. For the July program planning session, I asked participants to think of opportunities to work – and play – with other professional associations and any other organization with which we might have some connection. Take a peak at the preliminary [calendar](#) for the 2000-2001 year and you will see that many of the scheduled programs have us looking beyond the Oregon Chapter SLA. Of course, we plan to offer professional development programs presented by SLA headquarters, but we are also teaming with the Pacific Northwest Chapter and the Western Canada Chapter to offer a day-long professional development opportunity in Seattle in April.

On Saturday, December 2, we will host a reception for the Emporia State students at Portland State University. This will be a great opportunity to meet future members of our profession – and talk to them about career possibilities. For community service and fun, sign up to be an ORSLA volunteer at the grand opening of the wonderful new Beaverton Public Library on September 10.

There is not enough space here to write about all of the planned events – and some that aren't even on the calendar yet. But look over the calendar and pencil some dates into your personal calendar. And watch for updates. Also, you'll notice that the calendar now has an extra column where the "owner" of each event is identified. If you can see yourself getting more involved in the chapter – even just a little – contact the event owner and offer to help. If you

have any ideas about partnerships with other organizations that might benefit ORSLA members, contact one of the [board members](#).

NOTE: Although I have just stepped into the role of chapter president, I am going to pull a disappearing act from early September until early November while I am on sabbatical from my job at Intel. President-Elect Kathy Hemphill will be serving in my place. I'm sorry I will miss the Beaverton Library opening, the September kick-off meeting, and other programs that will be going on in my absence, but I hope I will see you – yes, you – at the December 2 board meeting and student reception.

Gerry Lukos

President's Letter

Kathy Hemphill
Fall, 2000

Midlife Musings

I recently spent an afternoon raking leaves in my yard, looking forward to a couple of hours of mindless, easy labor on a warm fall day. Hmm, I thought before long, it seems as if I did this just a few months ago. How could a year have passed by so quickly? I reminded myself that quite a few years had passed by quickly.

I recently celebrated my 50th birthday. Turning 30 or even 40 hadn't bothered me in the least – I looked young and felt great. But there's nothing young about 50. I tried hard to forget that the years were piling up, and stayed as busy as possible with a birthday vacation and party. Unfortunately, my busyness caused me to forget the correct day of the ORSLA Kick-off Breakfast. Ouch! I had my first "senior moment."

Now the solitude and repeatedness of my chore put me in the reflective mood I had tried to avoid. I started thinking about those 50 years. My personal life has always been very satisfying, thank goodness. But thoughts of my professional career resulted in some heavy sighs. I wasn't where I wanted to be, and I was afraid it may be too late to get there. My husband is talking about retirement, after all. Where had I gone wrong?

I became a librarian in my late thirties. I just dabbled in the profession for many years, always putting my family and home first, even though I had been encouraged in school to take my gumption to the corporate world. I joined SLA and attended meetings, but tried not to be noticed too much, fearing I would be asked to take on more than I cared to tackle. Now the children are grown, and the house and yard don't need as much attention. My career is suddenly a bigger and more important part of my life. How I wished I had given it more thought years ago!

Events Coming Up

Perhaps you've been too busy lately to give much thought to your professional life. Or perhaps you have thought about it, but aren't sure which direction to head, or what opportunities are available. The Oregon Chapter has several casual events planned over the next few months that will provide you with ample opportunity for thoughtful discourse with your colleagues.

November 17 evening potluck. Join us at Schwabe, Williamson and Wyatt on Friday, November 17th from 5 to 8 pm for an international dessert and finger-food potluck. The cost is a dish to share, but if you don't have time to cook or visit a deli, please come anyway. Potlucks tend to have plenty of food, and we'd hate to miss a chance to visit with you. Plan to spend a little time discussing program ideas and chapter growth. [Register now](#) to enjoy a relaxing evening with fellow members before the holiday rush!

December 1 lunch. Are you bombarded with conference and workshop announcements, and can't decide which to attend? Meet at the Salem Public Library on Friday, December 1st from 11:30 to 1:30, to hear your colleagues share their recent experiences. It's free, and lunch will be provided for SLA members. RSVP by November 22nd to [Marcia Hoak](#). The meeting will take place in the Plaza Room, and parking is available in the library's parking garage. Bring quarters for the meter!

December 2 late afternoon/evening. Next on the calendar is the student reception at Portland State University, scheduled for Saturday, December 2nd at PSU's Smith Center, room 236. This event is scheduled to coincide with an Emporia State class, but students and potential students in other programs are invited. A board meeting will take place from 3:30 to 4:30, with the reception following and lasting until 8 pm. Everyone is welcome to attend both the board meeting and reception.

I hope you don't wait for a major birthday or other crisis to evaluate your career goals. There's no better time than the present, and the Oregon Chapter of the Special Libraries Association is here to provide you with assistance and inspiration. If all you have time for now is to attend events and/or share your ideas for programs, that's fine, and we'd love to hear from you. If you'd like to become more involved, please talk to any of the current board members or team leaders. Believe me, working with this group of professionals is a rewarding and fun experience. One last thing. If your membership expires at the end of December, please renew as soon as possible. Your renewal notice should have arrived by now. Our chapter allotment check is based on year end membership statistics, so don't delay!

Take care, and happy holidays!
Kathy Hemphill
President-Elect

Note: Chapter president Gerry Lukos is on sabbatical. She will return the first week in November.

President's Letter

Gerry Lukos

Winter, 2001

As you may recall reading in past issues of the e-Oregonized Librarian, I was on sabbatical in September and October. I spent the full two months driving across the country by way of the Midwest all the way to Central Florida and back along a southern route and up the California Coast. Over 9,000 miles!

Sabbaticals are meant to be a head-clearing time, and I dutifully did not think (much) about work or life's other responsibilities as I toiled along highways and back roads, toured zoos, and visited old friends. When I arrived back in the office in early November, it was time to jump back into the work-a-day world. Although I had enjoyed the luxury of ignoring what had been going on in my corporate universe, life there had never stopped. In my absence, decisions were made, projects were initiated or cancelled, reorganizations happened. I had to dive right into the deep end - refreshed by my two months off, but fully involved. The experience made me think about how easy it can be to slip into a sabbatical frame of mind, when we should be fully engaged.

In our profession we might take a sabbatical of sorts by setting ourselves apart from the organizations where we work. We are librarians and we work in libraries. We may not do it consciously, but we can absent ourselves from life in the larger organization as we deal with library-related issues. But life outside the library - and outside the library profession - goes on. We can't blissfully ignore it. We have to be part of it. It is not even enough to accept change. Or just to anticipate it. We have to be part of the change and, when possible, lead it.

Many in our profession and in the Oregon Chapter of SLA are very much in tune with the changes taking place in the world of information. Some are already part of the change, while others are asking how the turmoil might affect them and what they can do about it. At the December 2nd ORSLA Student Reception, several people came up to me and asked essentially the same question, "How can I use my library skills outside a traditional library environment?"

Being an active member of a professional organization is one way of looking for - and helping others find - ways to deal with our changing profession. Courses offered by SLA and articles in our professional publications come at the issues from many directions and are a great source of professional development. My own favorite technique for finding energy and inspiration is networking with colleagues. Some of our members have never worked in a traditional library job. Some started there and then moved into other work settings. And some are taking their libraries in exciting new directions. There is so much we can draw from each other to keep ourselves from stagnating.

If you have been hunkered down at work and not actively participating in SLA activities because you "don't have time," come join your colleagues who have found that they don't have time NOT to be involved in programs and activities that put them in touch with others in their profession.

I regret that I had to miss the September kick-off event and the opening of the shiny new Beaverton Library, where ORSLA members helped greet visitors. I did get back in time for the International Potluck and the Student Reception, a phenomenally successful event. (Talk about energy and inspiration!) Take a look at the Chapter calendar and mark your personal calendar to attend some of the upcoming programs. Then come up and say "hi" to me, because I want to network with YOU.

--Gerry Lukos

P.S. If you're interested in reading about my sabbatical adventures, check out the web site I where I logged my progress at <http://www.cdevsol.com/projectcoco.htm>

President's Letter

**Gerry Lukos
Spring, 2001**

We had a pretty gentle winter this year, unlike our colleagues in other parts of the country. But when ORSLA President-Elect Kathy Hemphill and I traveled East to Savannah, Georgia, to attend SLA Winter Meeting in January, we brought some of the great weather along with us. Savannah is the epitome of a charming Southern town, and we got to spend a beautiful, sunny day strolling along the uncrowded streets from one square to another.

But Winter Meeting isn't just about sightseeing. It's about getting to meet active members of SLA from around the country and learning about what they are doing in their chapters – what types of programs they offer and how they deal with different issues, such as new technology or a geographically dispersed membership. I have long believed that the primary benefit of belonging to SLA – or any professional organization – is the opportunity to network and to forge relationships with colleagues. At Winter Meeting I heard the other Chapter and Division officers say the same thing.

Whether I travel across town to a program or across the country to a conference, I do so because I expect the content of the presentation or training being offered to be compelling and relevant to my needs. But, you know, you can always read a speech or an article written by the presenter. You can sit at your computer and take a tutorial. The real benefit of going to a conference or professional event is the opportunity to meet others who share your interests. Nothing replaces the personal contact with colleagues.

Those of us who truly enjoy meeting new people and schmoozing with colleagues may feel a little guilty at times doing something that seems like fun on business time. Those who would rather have root canal work than go to a cocktail party might regard professional networking as a punishment to be avoided. But whether it is a pleasure or a pain, networking is essential for professional development in the fast-paced information industry.

Your network can help you find hidden resources or technical knowledge that can help you do your job. On more than one occasion, when faced with a tough reference question, I have used the SLA member directory to locate someone who could point me to the best resource for an unfamiliar industry. After I extended a personal invitation,

dozens of SLA members from around the country signed up to participate in the Oregon Chapter's "virtual" Desktop Conference in February so they could get experience in a live chat.

And of course, your network is a key source of both job leads and potential job applicants. I'll admit that I first became actively involved with ORSLA when I was "between jobs." I got my first position at Intel thanks to a contact in a non-library network, but I probably would never have gotten into my current position with the Intel Library if it hadn't been for my involvement with SLA. I know there are others in our chapter who could say the same.

There are plenty of opportunities coming up for you to meet your colleagues face to face. Many of you are already planning to attend the SLA annual conference being held in San Antonio, June 9-14. If you can't travel that far for that long, you might consider going to Seattle on April 21 for the Joint Meeting with the Pacific Northwest and Western Canada chapters. This is a great opportunity to meet colleagues from around the northwest and SLA President Donna Scheeder, who will be delivering the keynote address. And by all means, I hope we'll see you on May 20 at the new Oregon Garden in Silverton for ORSLA's annual meeting. Come say "hello," find out what your colleagues are doing, meet someone new, and enjoy the flowers.

This will be my last message on the "front page" of the e-Oregonized Librarian. Many thanks to the Board, Team Leads and members who have been active this year planning and delivering programs – and covering for me while I was away for two months. I look forward to handing our virtual gavel over to Kathy and to supporting her and the Board in the year ahead.

--Gerry Lukos