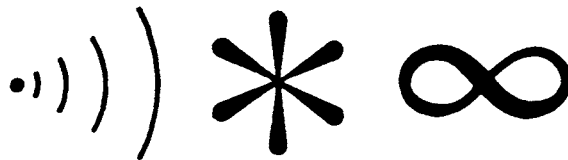


p·a·m

physics astronomy math



Volume 15 Number 4

May 1988

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

CAMILLE WANAT

It was just about a year ago that I was beginning to wonder exactly what I had let myself in for when I agreed to be the Chair of this Division. Now -- a very short year later -- my term as chair is almost over. I have found it to be a very worthwhile and satisfying experience and I would urge any of you who may be called upon for this type of service in the future to give it very serious thought. Preparing a division program for the conference is an interesting challenge; also, one really gets to know more members of the Division, as well as many members of other Divisions, and gains a far better sense of the whole Association. So, if you're ever called upon by a Nominating Committee to become a division officer, think about saying yes. The work isn't so bad and the experience is valuable. My thanks to the Division for making this year such a rewarding and pleasant one for me!

There are two items of Association interest that I wanted to mention: First, you may recall that in the last Bulletin I noted that Cleveland would not be the site of the 1990 Annual Conference as originally planned; it has since been announced that the 1990 Conference will be held in Pittsburgh. Next, I wanted to give you early warning about a bylaw change which was approved by the Board of Directors in January and which, after review by legal counsel, will be coming to the SLA membership for approval. Some of you may recall how difficult it has been for any bylaws revisions to be ratified, since the current bylaws require a 40% ballot return, as well as the 2/3 vote in favor of the amendment, for any change to pass. The problem has been

that 40% of the ballots have not been returned; as a result, there have been no revisions to our Association's bylaws since 1974. The bylaws change which will come to the membership for a vote would change the required ballot return to 25%; the catch is that, for one last time, 40% of the ballots for this change will have to be returned. So it is crucial that, when this revision comes to a membership vote, everyone returns their ballot.

And now some items of divisional interest: As a result of the P-A-M division's sponsorship of the talk by Dr. Judith Bardwick on career plateauing, the Division has been given a free copy of her book, *The Plateauing Trap*; there will be a drawing for this book at the Division's annual meeting. So be sure to come to the meeting; you may win the book!

I want to thank all of you who responded to Wally Pegram's request for library instruction and orientation materials for the Division's clearinghouse at the conference. Wally tells me that he has received a lot of interesting items, which we can look forward to examining at the Division's Open House on Monday night of the Conference.

Lastly, I want to extend special thanks on behalf of the Division to Karen Croneis and David Stern for their work in preparing bibliographies of core reference works in mathematics and in physics and astronomy, respectively. Their work comprises the Division's contribution to the forthcoming SLA publication "An SLA Division Bibliography of Best Reference Works."

SLA plans to publish this title this summer.

Report of the Membership Committee, Dorothy McGarry,
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WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

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(809) 878-2612

should alert Sandy Morton in SLA's Washington office: (202) 234-4700.

NOAA Library

The NOAA Library is expected to re-occupy its refurbished/cleaned site during this summer. The contract to Aspen Systems Corporation is scheduled for its operational start-up on July 31, 1988. The address will be (again):

6009 Executive Blvd.
Rockville, MD 20852

Reference Desk: 301-443-8330
ILL: 301-443-8334

NTIS

No further information on the privatization issue as of press time.

OMB Proposed Circular

The Office of Management and Budget has extended until July 15th the comment period from the public on its draft Circular: Guidelines for Federal Statistical Activities (see Federal Register, April 15, p. 12626). As proposed, there would be no dissemination to depository libraries; further, total cost recovery would be mandated.

From the Smithsonian Institution newsletter Torch, March 1988:

Joyce Rey-Watson goes online for astronomical data bases

Joyce Rey-Watson, chief librarian of the Smithsonian Astrophysical Branch Library, a member of the SI Libraries system, since 1969, remembers well the many hours early in her career spent using 3-by-5 library cards to conduct literature searches and to catalog new acquisitions. But then, in the early 1970s, bit by bit, bibliographic information began moving onto computer. "That's when life became more fun," Rey-Watson says.

In 1983, she published Information Sources and Services in Astronomy, Astrophysics and Related Space Sciences (Smithsonian Institution Libraries Research Guide, 2). The guide was written for science librarians and information specialists and was also intended to help research scientists and graduate students perform their own literature searches.

Since the publication of her bibliography, the number of astronomical data bases has greatly increased -- and Rey-Watson has not only become more proficient in their use, she has also become a leading advocate for their adoption by libraries everywhere.

In a recent interview with SAO Public Affairs Specialist Arlene Walsh, Rey-Watson talked about her work at the forefront of library technology.

Q. When did you first become interested in using data bases?

A. I was very interested in online data-base searching from its inception. However, in the 1960s, there were only one or two organizations -- NASA was one -- that had set up online data bases for literature search. In addition, until recently, online data bases were not specifically geared to the space sciences. For example, you would generally find astronomy information by searching data bases on the physical sciences.

Q. What is the advantage of using a data base for a literature search?

A. The advantages are speed, accuracy and flexibility. With a manual search, you might spend hours working with abstracts to pull out the information you want on a specific subject. In contrast, when you do an online search, you simply enter the subject headings that you desire and the computer will print out all citations and full abstracts.

For example, someone doing research on "hot stars" and "stellar winds" would start by forming sets out of the subject headings. The first set would be "stellar winds," the second "hot stars" and the third a combination of the two. The result would be a listing of all references to both "hot stars" and

"stellar winds" in the literature.

Q. When did you get online?

A. In 1980, I finally acquired access to a computer system and learned to search online. I soon discovered that it was not so easy to find the information on astronomy that I wanted, in part because astronomy and astrophysics had come to encompass many subdisciplines.

When preparing the bibliography, I couldn't find any sources for searching by astronomical object - only for searching by subject. However, soon after the guide was published, I learned about the world's largest astronomical data base, SIMBAD (Set of Identifications, Measurements and Bibliography for Scientific Data), which was set up and operated by the Strasbourg Astronomical Data Center at the Observatoire Astronomique in Strasbourg, France. SIMBAD was - and still is - the only source allowing searches to be conducted by catalog identification of stellar objects.

The people in Strasbourg were very helpful. Actually, it took me about two years - until April 1985 - to be able to access their data base from this country. Ours was the first library in the United States to offer the service to our staff.

Q. What are some of the capabilities of SIMBAD?

A. SIMBAD currently contains physical information on some 600,000 stars and another 100,000 non-stellar objects. It provides such fundamental data as coordinates, spectral type, proper motion, position, etc. In other words, a user can receive both the vital statistics on an object and a bibliography of all references to it since 1950. This is extremely valuable, because SIMBAD not only provides observers with the basic astronomical data, it also allows them to compare data with previous published results.

Q. Have you ever met your SIMBAD colleagues face to face?

A. Yes, indeed. At the 1987 meeting of the American Astronomical Society in Pasadena, California, I met some representatives from Strasbourg. Practically no one in the United States

had ever seen SIMBAD before; I helped the Strasbourg staff demonstrate its capabilities to American astronomers.

After the meeting, the director of the Observatoire Astronomique invited me to come to France to rewrite the English version of the SIMBAD user's manual. So, last September I spent three weeks in Strasbourg, preparing a draft of the manual and learning advanced techniques for the operation of the data base.

Q. What lies ahead?

A. We are moving toward bigger and better data-base facilities, and national and international astronomical data centers are the shape of things to come. Networks are currently being set up for access to all types of astronomical data, including data from spacecraft and, in the future, the Hubble Space Telescope.

I am now involved in efforts being coordinated by NASA and by the European Space Information System group to provide easy access to space-science data archives and to bring organizations together to standardize data. In the future, I hope that scientists will be able to access data bases directly through their own computers. That's what I'm aiming for - to help people become independent, particularly in the use of SIMBAD.

In April 1988 A survey about library collections in astronomical observatories was sent to 14 observatories in the United States. Six responses have been received. All observatories responding have library collections at the observatory, although two receive their major library services from a supporting institution. All collections are available 24 hours a day. Special collections of preprints are maintained in the Space Telescope Science Institute and in Kitt Peak National Observatory. Publications from other observatories are collected by the Space Telescope Science Institute, Kitt Peak, Palomar, and Yerkes observatories. Contact between the library and other staff is

maintained via a written newsletter or new book list in three observatories, through a library committee in two observatories, and informally. Staffing and budgets for library materials are available upon request from Alice Primack, University of Florida Central Science Library, Gainesville, FL 32611.

However, it is very interesting to compare PMA's measures with the other sci/tech branch libraries on campus -- or with similar libraries in other institutions. (Hint! Hint! I'm curious about what you all come up with.)

So, friends, get our your 1986/87 statistics and your calculators. It really is kind of fun!

1986/87 Selected Statistics, PMA Library

- a. Annual charged circulation: 74,004
- b. Annual in-house use (pickup): 44,336
- c. Jurisdiction population: 1,194 (Faculty/staff/students in Physics, Math, and Astronomy)
- d. Annual attendance: 285,194
- e. Holdings (as of 8-31-87): 64,149

1986/87 Annual Performance Measures, PMA Library (all figures are rounded)

Circulation per capita = $a/c = 62$ charges/person

In-house use per capita = $b/c = 37$ in-house uses/person

Visits per capita = $d/c = 239$ visits/person

Holdings per capita = $e/c = 54$ volumes/person

Charged Turnover = charged use per volume = $a/e = 1.5$ charges/volume

Overall Turnover = total use per volume = $(a+b)/e = 1.8$ uses/volume

Suggested references:

Kantor, Paul B. Objective Performance Measures for Academic and Research Libraries. Washington, DC: ARL, 1984.

McClure, Charles R., and Betsy Reifsnnyder. "Performance Measures for Corporate Information Centers," Special Libraries, July 1984, pp. 193-204.

Rally, Tony. "Performance Measures for Academic Libraries," Australian

.....

Physics Notes, Karen Croneis, University of Texas, Austin

Las fall, Susan Aridis (Engineering Librarian at UT Austin) and I began presenting workshops on library effectiveness and performance measures.

At a recent day-long meeting for the Texas SLA Chapter, we asked participants to bring data on their libraries' collections and use. Since these were statistics that libraries keep routinely, most people brought the requested information and, to their surprise, they actually calculated some performance measures!

It was easy; it was fun; it was exciting!

Because it was so successful, I would like to share some measures from the Physics-Mathematics-Astronomy (PMA) library at the University of Texas at Austin.

Performance measures are best used for internal evaluations and decisions. For example, PMA's annual charged turnover of 1.15 means that, on average, a volume was checked out slightly more than one time during 1986/87. Knowing that, I easily justified criteria for such diverse projects as a recent weeding project and last year's journal cancellation project.

A caveat: Using these measures to compare libraries or to set "standard" has serious drawbacks. I know that many people outside PMA's "jurisdiction" use PMA materials. And, obviously, our "population: figure skews the results in a way no corporate library could successfully compete with.

Academic and Research Libraries, March 1987, pp. 1-9.
(I'll send you a copy if needed.)

Van House, Nancy A., et al. Output Measures for Public Libraries: A Manual of Standardized Procedures, 2d. ed. Chicago: ALA, 1987.

Thanks to everyone for their responses to my columns this year. And welcome to the new Physics Columnist David Davidoff from Argonne National Laboratory.

Finally, many thanks and kudos to Judy Bausch, our P-A-M Bulletin editor, for accepting, deciphering, and editing my long Physics Columns (complete with charts and formulas). You're a wonder, Judy!

See y'all in Denver! (Statistics in hand, I hope!

IAU COLLOQUIUM NO. 110, LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SERVICES IN ASTRONOMY, 27 JULY - AUGUST 1, 1988, DU PONT PLAZA HOTEL, WASHINGTON D.C.

Remember the registration fee of \$75.00 is due by May 15. If you need a registration form call Brenda Corbin at 202-653-1499.

Discounted airfares for travel to LISA.

Delta Airlines is offering special discounts for LISA attendees within the continental US. You or your travel agent must make reservations 7 days in advance via this toll-free number: 1-800-221-1212; you must mention the file number T10189 when making the reservations.

We're looking forward to seeing all of you at the conference.

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Special Libraries Association
Physics-Astronomy-Mathematics Division

Annual Report
1987/88

Membership

As of 31 March 1988, the Physics-Astronomy-Mathematics Division (P-A-M) had 143 members, of which 98 were primary members and 45 were secondary.

Finances

The financial state of the P-A-M division, while not flush, appears secure. P-A-M consistently receives contributions from publishers and vendors covering the disciplines of physics, astronomy and mathematics, which help defray the costs of providing the Hospitality Suite for division members at the Annual Conference. The Ad Hoc Committee on Fund Raising will be making a final report at the 1988 Annual Conference on the results of its investigation of advertising in, or sponsorship of, the P-A-M Bulletin as another source of income for the Division. The Union List of Astronomy Serials provides a small, but continuing, source of income. The publication of the P-A-M Directory was once again donated by the American Mathematical Society.

Officers

During 1987/88, the officers, committee chairs, and committee members have all contributed to the work of the Division, as well as of the Association. These members deserve recognition and thanks:

Past Chair	Mary Ann Southern
Chair-elect	Helen Knudsen
Secretary	Karen Croneis
Treasurer	Bruce Pelz
Bulletin editor	Judith Bausch
Nominating Committee	Carol Hutchins, Chair Richard Funkhouser Joyce Rey
Membership Committee	Dorothy McGarry, Chair Nancy Zachariasen Marilyn Steinberg
Awards Committee	Nancy Anderson, Chair Cathy Greene Cathy Pasterczyk
Ad Hoc Committee on Fundraising	David Stern, Chair Judith Bausch Marion Kreiter Don Marion Kathy Strand
Hospitality (1988)	Bruce Pelz

Thanks are also due to the Division's Government Relations Representative, Brenda Corbin and to the Division's Liaison to the SLA Cataloging Committee, Mary Ann Southern. Candidates for officers for 1988/89 are Bruce Pelz for Chair-Elect and Cathaleen Van Atta for Treasurer.

1987 SLA Annual Conference, Anaheim

Actions taken at the annual Division business meeting included: agreement to include electronic mail addresses in the next edition of the Division membership directory, as well as to include a copy of the Division bylaws; increase of the Bulletin subscription rate to \$9/year; change of one of the Bulletin deadlines from February 1 to February 15; and decision that no change was needed in the Division's official scope note.

The 1987 Division Program at the Conference included four subject workshops (Physics, Astronomy, Mathematics, and Computer Science), joint sponsorship (with the Chemistry Division) of a program on non-bibliographic databases in the sciences, a vendor update, and sponsorship of a field trip to the Palomar Observatory (as well as joint sponsorship of two other tours).

1988 SLA Winter Meeting, Williamsburg

The Chair and Chair-Elect, Helen Knudsen, attended the Winter Meeting in Williamsburg. As well as planning for both the 1988 and 1989 conferences, the Division officers attended the DACOLT sessions and participated in the Division Cabinet and Joint Cabinet sessions. In the report of the Division Cabinet chair to the Board of Directors, the efforts of the P-A-M Division in support of the International Colloquium on Library and Information Services in Astronomy (to be held in July 1988) were noted.

1988 SLA Annual Conference, Denver

Division plans for the Denver Conference are now complete. P-A-M will continue its tradition of workshops in the areas of physics, mathematics, and astronomy and will co-sponsor, with the Sci-Tech Division, a computer science workshop. Since last year's vendor update was so popular, it will be held again with participation from the American Institute of Physics, the American Mathematical Society, the Institute for Scientific Information, and INSPEC. With the Chemistry Division and the Metal/Materials Division, P-A-M is sponsoring a program on non-bibliographic databases in the sciences and, with five other divisions, is a co-sponsor of a speaker on career plateauing. Based on discussion at the Division's last business meeting, the Division will hold a clearinghouse for library instructional materials germane to the three disciplines at its Hospitality Suite. Lastly, the Division is sponsoring a field trip to Boulder to tour the National Center for Atmospheric Research and the National Bureau of Standards.

Other Projects

The astronomy librarians within the Division are devoting considerable effort to the International Colloquium on Library and Information Services in Astronomy (an official colloquium of the International Astronomical Union), to be held in Washington, DC in July 1988. The P-A-M Division submitted a funding request to the Special Libraries Association requesting support for some aspect of the International Colloquium and was awarded \$2,000. The Colloquium planners are free to use the funds where most needed; this flexibility on the part of SLA is very much appreciated. SLA's support of the Colloquium was given, in David Bender's words, "in light of SLA's commitment to the development and advancement of international library and information services." Division members have been very active in other fundraising to defray housing costs for observatory librarians from around the world, and have received both corporate and personal contributions (with all personal contributions being matched by an anonymous publisher!). The P-A-M Executive Board agreed to donate a copy of the Division's Union List of Astronomy Serials to each registrant at the Colloquium; a second edition of this work is to be discussed at that session.

The P-A-M Division contributed to the forthcoming SLA publication "An SLA Division Bibliography of Best Reference Works." The P-A-M contribution is the work of two members: Karen Croneis for the mathematics section and David Stern for the physics and astronomy section. Thanks are due to Karen and David for their willingness to participate in this project and for their high quality bibliographies.

Comments

The Chair has found the last two years as an officer of the P-A-M Division extremely valuable. The greatest benefit has been getting to know a much larger proportion of the Division's members as well as the leadership of the other SLA divisions. The challenge of preparing the Division's program at an annual conference and the opportunity to develop a much greater familiarity with the Association structure and officers has been both productive and personally satisfying.

Respectfully submitted,

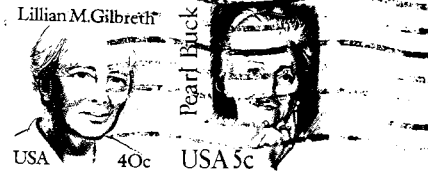


Camille Wanat
20 April 1988

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 290 Dennison Bldg
 Ann Arbor MI

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