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A CONVERSATION WITH RICHARD ROBBINS CONCLUSION

In the first part of this conversation between Richard Robbins, librarian at the Adult Correctional Institution, and Judith Paster, Managing Editor of the *Bulletin*, similarities between prison and public librarianship emerged, as well as a description of Rick's duties and a history of how the libraries at the ACI evolved. In this conclusion, Rick describes some of the problems he has encountered as a prison librarian, and discusses his motivation and rewards in this special area of librarianship.

J: Another aspect of prison librarianship that you've alluded to a number of times, and which appears in these articles I've read, is the problem of burn-out.

Burn-out seems to be a problem in all the service professions, nursing, teaching, social work. Many reference librarians last only a few years in the public sector, then move to management or technical services. Is the problem greater in prison librarianship?

R: Much, much greater. Probably few people survive this for more than two years.

J: On the other hand, when I called to make this interview appointment, you said you thought everyone ought to have some exposure to prisons.

R: I think everyone in life should be exposed to the penal system, because it's getting to be a bigger and bigger part of our society and our culture.

J: John Moran was quoted recently in *Providence Business News* that over fifty to sixty percent of those in prison are there because of crimes related to substance abuse.

R: I'd say at least that much. Even crimes, like breaking and entering, often have that behind it.

To return to the question of burn-out, yes, it exists within the prison at every level. For

everyone working in a penal system, deals with high stress, high tension...

J: You mentioned earlier that there is a great tension within the prison population itself, even in its demands for library materials. I assume that when you arrive at the prison in the morning, you don't drink a cup of coffee and doodle on notes, waiting for the phone to ring!

R: It's a busy job, obviously...

J: And then there's that stretching we were talking about, that mental and emotional stretching that you do as you move from level of patron to another, one problem to another.

R: I think it's a little similar to the reference librarian on a very busy night in a public library...that's a high-stress thing. You know that, of course. You rush to unwind.

J: I noticed that particularly in the Business Department of the Providence Public Library. I chose to work there for a short period of time, though it's not my training. I thought I'd like to know how reference worked in another field. I can remember those days of being on the desk most of the time, and at five o'clock, going to my locker for my coat and to pick up a passenger who needed a ride home, and

wanting to weep. Not because I hadn't done a good day's work; in fact, I'd probably done quite well, but nonetheless, the thought of starting the car and getting myself and the passenger home safely, seemed overwhelming.

R: It's strenuous, isn't it? It's very, very strenuous. Here, it's less strenuous in some senses, because there are not as many people, and yet, more strenuous in others.

J: Phil Koons, a prison library consultant, says in Library Journal that prison librarians are "Renaissance people--all things to all clients." Do you ever think of yourself in this way?

R: This is true. Without a full staff of librarians, you have to do everything, book selection, discarding, cataloging, processing, reader's advisor, reference, you do it all, every single aspect. It's similar to a small public library where one person does almost everything, except that person wouldn't have to cope with five buildings.

J: I can relate somewhat to that feeling. Recently, I worked at the Weaver library in East Providence, and there are times when you are the librarian. Even at Pawtucket, I felt that way on Friday nights, when, except for the maintenance man, and a couple of pages, I was responsible for the whole place, the lights, locking the doors, handling any disruptions that might take place. When my colleagues departed at five o'clock, leaving me "in charge," I could feel the weight of responsibility descend on my shoulders.

R: There is one tremendous plus to the prison library, and you rarely hear about it. There are several pluses.

J: Let's hear the pluses.

R: One, you are not working nights and weekends. That's a rather superficial one, I guess. Another is that you do not have building problems. You mentioned the building responsibilities. Here, I'm not in charge of buildings.

J: Or the boiler.

R: That's right. Praise the Lord. At Warwick, we had four buildings, and all of them had terrible problems. It's a system big enough to require a building engineer, yet not big enough to have one. I developed what Jim Giles calls "building burnout" in Warwick. I truly did. I got so sick of building problems.

J: I've heard branch librarians say that. Getting calls in the middle of the night or

making sure, if it snows during the night, that sidewalks are shoveled in the morning. You're legally responsible for them.

R: Not having the building headaches is a tremendous plus, as is not having the annual budget...

J: That reminds me of another concern in public libraries, that of security. I remember a woman and her son in the Pawtucket library one day, who expressed concern at seeing the security guard arrive at five o'clock. I explained to her that all city libraries had guards, not that we had much, if any, trouble, but just to be there in case of it. Do you ever feel insecure here?

R: No, no. You always have correctional officers nearby, and they work pretty well. Occasionally there's a fight breaking out among inmates. There's a good deal of enmity among them.

One day I went into the Medium Security library and found it wasn't there. No books, no shelves. They'd been moved to another room. Why? Because after my last visit, one inmate had taken a typewriter and thrown it at another inmate. So the director of that building moved the library to a place that could be better observed by the correctional officers. The door of the library is now close to the guard's station. Through all the buildings, there are chaplains and teachers around all the time. Our Catholic chaplain is a nun, about five feet tall, and she's in and around the buildings all the time.

J: You were talking about rehabilitation. Of course one thinks of "spiritual uplifting"..

R: There's much less interest in religious materials than I had thought there would be. Very little interest in religious books here. I think one person asked for a Bible, one, and we do have all these Bibles sitting on the shelves. There's very little interest in spiritual development, that I've noticed. It certainly doesn't reflect itself in the reading.

In the non-fiction area, there is a certain amount of interest in Vietnam War materials, both fiction and non-fiction. Many of our inmates are veterans, and many would not be here if they had not been in that little war.

J: Exactly.

R: That's another sad thing. The guy who works for me here in the office is a veteran of that war, probably suffering, probably why he's here, too. There's some interest in pop psychology, not a great deal. Fiction is primarily the thing, and believe it or not, a great deal of interest in Westerns, which isn't a big demand in public libraries.

J: No, except for the obvious, like Louis L'Amour. What about mysteries?

R: Very little interest in mysteries. Very little interest here, even among women who are the main readers in the public library. There's a small group who read science fiction, again not too many, the brighter people. Just as in the public library, usually.

J: All of these types of fiction are escapist in nature. Most of us pick up a mystery to escape, to be somewhere else for half an hour.

R: That's right, and I have so many that I've been given by DSLS that I wish I had more mystery-readers, but again it's mostly women who are seeking this kind of escape in the public libraries.

J: Is there any interest in biography at all? I see a copy of Papa Hemingway on your shelf.

R: Probably a mistake, although it depends on the building. In Maximum, sometimes, they will read a little bit more than in other places. It's a little bit different in its set-up than the other buildings. Each prisoner has his own room or cell, while the other buildings are dormitories. There's more privacy in Maximum. It may seem more brutal to us than the others, but the dormitories hold forty people in a room, and it's very hard to read. So there is more reading in Max, and they're often happier, believe it or not, than those in Medium or Women's.

Why aren't they interested in biographies? I think it's because biographies are about successful people, and they want to read more about unsuccessful people, mass murderers and the like.

J: I think that's a good point you've just made. Why rub the successes of others in?

R: I've been trying to figure it out. There are so many interesting books they might like. Once in a while, one of them may get interested in vocational things, about a future job. I've got a man who wants to grow shrimp, be a shrimp farmer in Brazil, and he's

constantly asking for aquiculture, relating to conditions in Latin America.

J: He has a goal.

R: Oh, yes, excellent, and it's a challenge to find the materials, and then people come to you for other reasons. There aren't that many people they can come to. I have another guy interested in patenting something he's invented.

J: What did you do about that? Do you tell him about the patent collection downtown?

R: No, just talk to him about it. He didn't really ask for library-type of advice!

J: So, they mostly like the best sellers.

R: They are right up to the minute on authors, their latest books. They are much more aware of the current and new in literature than the average public library patron.

J: Why is that? You're not going to tell me they read the New York Times!

R: Oh yes. Sure, they read the Providence Journal, and they subscribe to magazines. Once in a while, they share the New Yorker among themselves, and they can buy the New York Times right in here. It's available in the buildings on Sunday for them. Also, they have access to television and the talk shows. They will be after the new books. For instance, as soon as Tip O'Neill's Man of the House came out, there were requests for it. Woodward's Veil was requested immediately. It's old now, but they were interested in Arlene Violet's Convictions. One guy in High Security said to me rather recently "I haven't read Convictions. I want to read it. I'm in it!"

J: Having identified the big books, where do you get them?

R: I go to Waldenbooks once a week. I can spend a modest amount of two hundred and fifty dollars a week at Walden's. Also, DSLS will buy me about five thousand dollars worth of books a year, which is helpful. But the two hundred and fifty a week is very small for six libraries.

J: It sounds like a lot, until you think of the cost of best sellers at twenty to twenty-five dollars apiece...

R: That's about ten books a week. So for the best sellers, I wait until they come out in paperback, and people just have to wait. Sometimes someone will request a book like

the latest Garcia Marquez, Love in the Time of Cholera. "Gee," I told him, "that's twenty bucks. Let's wait till it comes out in paperback." This guy's very bright and has good reading tastes, not too many like him, but very refreshing when you find them. So, I wait till they come out in paperback, and then with the twenty percent discount, I can get about forty paperbacks for my two hundred and fifty dollars. A great, great many.

But again, you have to use judgment at Maximum. I'm buying fewer paperbacks, because hardbacks tend to come back more than the paperbacks. The guy who's never borrowed a book in his life, raised in South Providence perhaps, can hardly read, discovers that he can borrow a book. He'll borrow a paperback, even if he can't read, and it will never come back. These are some of the things you have to take into account.

But it is a fascinating segment of society that is with us, and many of us run into these people only when they break into our houses and steal all of our stuff. And we don't even see them then. But here, they have kept a lot of humanity, and many of us on the outside have done things as bad, or at least, contemplated them.

J: So there are rewards, in spite of...

R: There are many, many, many rewards. No one would be here, would do it for a minute, if there were not. And those rewards are similar to those in public libraries, except that these people are more needy. Some might feel that prisoners are less worthwhile...

The prison is a little bit like a church, very similar. I know you can relate to the church scene, a parish, a clergyman who knows that he can't be too discouraged at the evil-doing among his parishioners, because he knows the church is not a museum for saints, but rather a *hospital for sinners*. So, we have that in common with the church.

J: We are dealing with sinners, not the righteous.

R: That's right. No, we're not a museum for saints at all. These people are not here, most of them, for having missed Sunday School. On the other hand, they do have needs, like other people.

J: As librarians, and as people, we're trying to come to grip with those needs.

R: And in some ways, they're more

important to help than other people, because there's a chance that many of them have never had a kind word spoken to them.

J: So there's an emotional gratification. How would you encourage librarians to go into this field? Do you have any thoughts on that? You yourself are not going to be in it forever.

R: Right, right.

J: You've made a tremendous contribution, and from what I've heard, you've gained a lot emotionally. You must also have a feeling of having gone and done something, met a challenge, accomplished something difficult, and you will take that sense of accomplishment with you, whatever your next step may be. That's a kind of reward. You may have given it to yourself, or had it given to you.

R: That's true. Once I taught four sessions of Smoke-enders. I had a room of a hundred people in the Jordan Marsh Auditorium for four sessions. It was a very difficult, trying thing. After the fourth session, I said, "That's enough; I've done enough. I've paid my dues." How can you convince all those hard-bitten smokers to stop smoking?!

J: It's a good program. I didn't use it myself, but I understand that it's quite good.

R: I've used it, and many others! But getting others to be prison librarians is a challenge. Perhaps if it paid more, that would help. Perhaps, if there were one library instead of five, that would help.

J: It doesn't sound as if it's a good place for a novice, someone right out of library school. For many right out of library school, even being at the PPL, is overwhelming. It takes a lot of "seasoning."

R: Right. And yet, there at the PPL, they do have other people they're working with. And also, they're doing primarily one thing, BIS, Art & Music, Reference, Reader's Advisor, cataloging, whatever.

J: Isolation is a problem for prison librarians. The problem of professional, as well as other kinds of isolation, looms large in the literature. And then there's the physical effect of the setting itself. Was it difficult to get used to the atmosphere? Even your door here now is locked. Does the atmosphere create some of the stress?

R: In the beginning, that's very much so, not because you yourself are going through the checks, but you are bothered very much by others having to do this, the very people that we're serving. You hear at night, the doors clanging, and you hear of your library clerks being taken into segregation, put in the lock-up because of some violation of rules.

When I first came here, I was very much bothered by the concept of unfairness. Life was unfair to most inmates. But after you're here for a while, you realize that life is unfair to everybody, people on the outside, people in prison. And this is why people dream up the idea of heaven and hell, I guess. There must be some reason. But life is unfair for everybody, and if you let that bother you and keep you from helping, then...

J: Now you're talking about yourself, not how the prisoners adjust here...

R: That's another matter. But if I can't work here because I'm so unhappy that people here are, have been, and will be unfairly treated, then that doesn't make sense. After a while, you begin to think less of how unfairly they're treated, and you realize that they may be treated more fairly than you thought. After all, you're hearing their point of the story, and there are two sides to every story. Prisoners are usually able to make you believe what they say. I don't know whether that's conning, or they're good salespeople!

J: There is a parallel to other kinds of work, psychiatric social work, for example. There are people who cannot handle its demands, who cannot distance themselves. I don't mean to sound insensitive, but you almost have to establish an immunity, to separate your life from theirs, your thoughts from theirs...

R: You have to be like a physician who doesn't faint when he sees blood, because then, he can't help anybody.

J: Did you have any feeling beforehand that you would be equipped to handle this kind of job? What gave you a hint that you might be able to do this? A social concern?

R: Strangely enough, out in California, I met a woman who worked in prison libraries, and she told me there was a job open in San Quentin, like this, in charge of libraries, and I applied for it. I got interested out there, in California, knowing and talking to these librarians. When I came back here and discovered that there was the same job open in Rhode Island that I didn't get in San Quentin, I

thought "wow!"

J: Because of the challenge, then?

R: Yes, the challenge, and I suppose it is a way to serve. It's the service, and how long one can continue, I don't know. But I think it gives back a lot, the satisfactions that you get, of helping these people who are the discards from our society in one way or another.

Emerson Greenaway, whom you're probably too young to have heard of, a director of the Philadelphia Free Library and one of the great librarians in American library history, once said that the joy of library work was to bring good books and good people together. Here, we could say it's bad books and bad people!!

J: They don't ask you for Tolstoy, Dostoevsky...

R: Actually, Dostoevsky is quite popular here. Yes, he is, not Tolstoy.

J: Crime and Punishment, obviously!

R: Crime and Punishment is very popular, really. I think I've got an extra copy over there, waiting for the next request. It's very appropriate. I think you do have to have, any librarian has to have, a little bit of the service attitude. I really do, and here it is the same thing, only more so.

J: The demands one must face are enormous. If we're talking flexibility on a normal library job, we're talking twice the flexibility here.

R: You have to have an urge to help people. You also need a little bit of, not noblesse oblige, but something close to it. We who have so much in our lives must try to do something to help these people. That feeling is essential to being here. I think everyone in the Education Department has to feel this commitment.

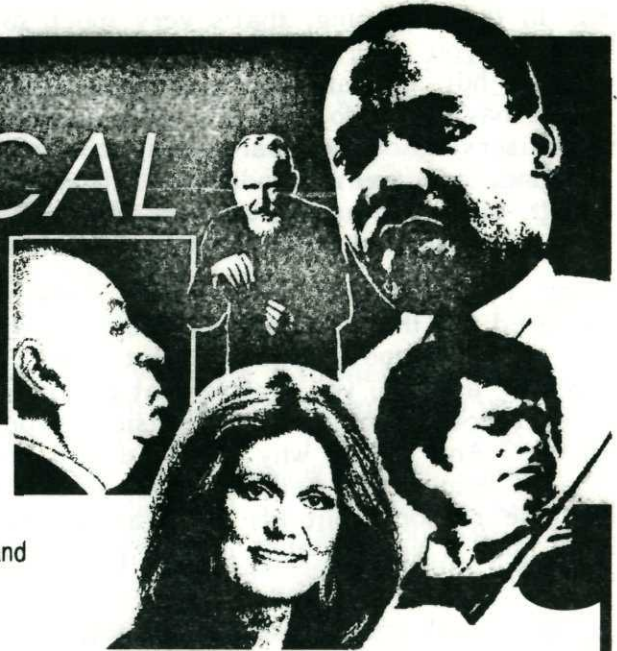
I know one teacher who left here to go back to teaching in the public schools. He hadn't been in one for awhile, and after one year on the outside, returned to us, saying, "My God, I can't stand those creeps outside. I'm coming back to teach where it's civilized! Back to prison!"

* * * * *

"A big surprise is that so many inmates use the library...the average usage level is 42% of the prisoners..."

American Libraries, January 1989, p.16.

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THOUGHTS ON THE 1988 RILA CONFERENCE

by Kathryn E. Ryan

The 1988 Rhode Island Library Association Conference was successful in meeting its objectives. It informed the library community on issues we jointly face, established a forum for discussion of new challenges and directions, and provided a chance for so many of us who become isolated to get together and celebrate our considerable strengths.

As outgoing Chair, and last to coordinate this type of conference, I would like to thank you all. It only succeeded with the input and support of the membership, the Executive Board, our sister organizations credited in the Program brochure and, not least of all, the Committee. Let me also thank David Mello, Supervisor of Children's Services, Fall River Public Library, as professional graphic artist, for the outstanding cover on which so many commented.

We did encounter problems. While evaluations were positive, attendance was down somewhat from last year. Directors in at least one case stayed at work to cover positions in their libraries, allowing staff to attend the conference. Staff shifted off with each other. Some on night shifts gave up free mornings in order to attend. Short staffing is one reality that we need to continue to address in planning conferences to meet the needs of the membership.

Vendors are another. In my four years on the Committee, and especially as Chair, I have had the opportunity to talk at length with vendors. In the past, it was axiomatic that they provided underwriting for the conference, as well as being involved in information exchange and showcasing their products. The first part of this axiom is no longer true.

Using referrals from the library community, as well as lists from ALA, NELA, MLA, RIEMA, SLA, and ARIHSL, we sent out over 250 informational packets. Since the majority of attendees attend only a single day, we again asked vendors for two days of exhibits, despite their stated reluctance. To meet their time and budget constraints, we ran exhibits Monday afternoon and Tuesday morning. This schedule enabled exhibitors from New York and similar distances to build in travel time, as well as costs for a single "overnight," and local exhibitors did not lose two full work days.

We were able to draw only twenty-five vendors. Many of those were RILA members committed to our support. The difficulties in attracting more exhibitors were several. First and foremost was the fact that our association has a diverse library population. It is not targeted. The following cases prove the point. The day after RILA closed, vendors were out in force at a medical library technology fair in Providence. Vendors find an entire program targeted to a specific audience profitable. Shortly thereafter, the John Russell Bartlett Society hosted a pre-Christmas book fair featuring a host of small publishers. Again, not just 'publishers', but SMALL publishers were a single focus. This fair drew more vendors than RILA. In another instance, a childrens' company said RILA conflicted with a kindergarten conference. Vendors simply don't get enough business from a multi-faceted conference to make attendance cost-effective for them.

The Committee is presently looking into alternatives. One alternative is simply to run a conference without exhibitors. The Massachusetts Library Association this year drew over four hundred to its midwinter conference in Worcester. MLA runs its program without exhibitors.

Maryland, facing a problem similar to that of Rhode Island, has successfully begun to run conferences without vendors. The link between the Association and the commercial sector is integral, but perhaps needs to be re-thought. New challenges, new directions...

There is a second problem with the exhibits, as we have known them. They lock us into what is becoming a prohibitively expensive, and less responsive, hotel structure. Hotels are changing to meet their own constraints. (In this area we had a number of complaints from conference attendees, both in terms of the facility and the food. We are addressing these complaints with the provider.) One interesting change in pricing structure, for example, has been to eliminate the charging of coffee by the urn. For the first year, our 'coffee and' was priced as a meal. We sorely missed the help of Joe Green, our liaison with the Marriott, for the past three years.

As I mulled over these two major areas of

exhibits and facility, I reflected on the concerns of the Committee. Was the presently structured conference the most appropriate vehicle to meet our needs? Then I came across a copy of the RILA Bulletin from ten years ago.

Whatever the challenges of that committee may have been, the 'sense' of the conference issue was of a vital, but less complicated library world. That conference issue is available for reading in many places, but I'll close with a comparison of costs from that conference and the 1988 Conference.

	Registration Fees	Luncheon Costs
1979 Monday	\$ 3.00	\$ 5.45
Tuesday	\$ 3.00	\$ 5.45
1988 Monday	\$20.00	\$12.00
Tuesday	\$20.00	\$ 7.50

They DO confirm that more has changed than time. I have no doubt that WE have the capacity to change and grow in response to new challenges and new directions.

Join us.

Kathryn E. Ryan is Circulation Supervisor at Salve Regina College Library, and outgoing Chair of the Conference Committee.

**TASK FORCE ON FEES ISSUES
FINAL REPORT**

The RHILINET Task Force on Fees for Services, chaired by Beth Perry of DSLS, submitted its final report to the RHILINET Committee on January 20th and held a public hearing on its findings on January 24th at the Cranston Public Library. While the report was favorably received by those at the hearing, many questions and comments also were elicited.

Any further deliberations regarding the report will be undertaken by the RHILINET Committee, chaired by Dorothy Frechette.

The position of the Task Force regarding fees is contained in the "Guidelines" section of the report. Four guidelines as to where libraries may not or should not charge fees are stated thusly:

- 1.No publicly supported library may charge

for the loan of library materials
(See R.I. General Laws 29-4-6);

- 2.Libraries should not charge fees for programs;
- 3.Libraries should not charge for reference services;
- 4.Libraries should not charge fees for loan of equipment.

Copies of the complete report are available from the DSLS Professional Collection.

people

PAMELA GOLLIS recently was appointed Head of Shared Resources at the Providence Public Library. She has been a member of the reference staff at PPL.

Senator Victoria Lederberg, Chair of the Legislative Commission on Statewide Funding of Libraries and an advocate for libraries in the General Assembly for many years, received the 1989 "Sweetheart of the Year Award" from the Coalition of Library Advocates (COLA) at COLA's annual reception and program on February 14th.

JOAN GELCH has been elected Chair of the Coalition of Library Advocates, succeeding JOAN RESS REEVES, chair of COLA for the past five years.

Governor Edward D. DiPrete proclaimed February 14, 1989 as JOAN RESS REEVES DAY in honor of Joan's meritorious service as Chair of the Coalition of Library Advocates for the past five years. During Joan's tenure, COLA has become an active statewide library support group representing over four thousand people. Congratulations to Joan on a job well done.

RITA WARNOCK has been named Curator of BroadSides at the John Hay Library. She assumed her duties on February 1.

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REMINDER!

**RILA 1989 Membership Renewals
are due by March 31st**

**Complete renewal form is available
in the January/February Bulletin**

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A REPORT FROM ALA'S MID-WINTER
CONFERENCE

by Howard Boksenbaum

ALA met at its biggest mid-winter conference January 7-12, in Washington, D.C. Registrations mounted to 8,798, and the exhibit hall sported 2,702 exhibitors. A myriad of programs and meetings filled more than half a dozen hotels. As your representative to Council, I busied myself with keeping on top of that body's activities, which spanned a three page agenda, filled my looseleaf binder with over one hundred pages, and my suitcase with even more special reports and miscellaneous communications -- very little of which could even be considered extraneous. Thanks to my able predecessor, Carol DiPrete, and many of Rhode Island's long-time ALA mavens like Liz Futas and Bruce Daniels, I managed to get through the week without getting more than a little lost.

Much of Council's deliberations centered on matters internal to the Association -- particularly the budget, which in 1989 will rise to \$23,435,898. Controversy continues over the respective roles of revenue-generating vs. non-revenue generating expenditures. The first category includes ALA's extensive publishing agenda, conferences, and graphics, while the non-revenue generating side encompasses ALA offices, committees, divisions, roundtables. The conflict seems to be an inherent one and unresolvable, although this year's budget moves in the direction of mission-oriented, as opposed to revenue-oriented expenditure. Revenue generating expenditures are 50% of the 1989 budget, whereas they were 53% in 1988; non-revenue generating expenditures rise to 42% in 1989 from 38% in 1988. ALA's Planning Committee made a preliminary report on the conflict, and Council referred it to the president and treasurer for a close look before voting to accept or reject it at the summer meeting in Dallas. Generally speaking, ALA is in good financial condition -- there will be no need for a dues increase this year, as some had feared.

Council also took up over twenty items that went beyond internal operation. Following the report of the Presidential Committee on Information Literacy, ALA decided to take a leadership role in raising that issue through its units, the White House Conference, and forming a Coalition on Information Literacy to raise the issue nationally.

Council also heard and accepted reports of the Freedom to Read Foundation and the Intellectual Freedom Committee. Speaking for the IFC, Chair Jim Schmidt was unable to announce a conclusion to the FBI Library Awareness Program, but pledged ALA's "eternal vigilance" through FOIA requests, monitoring of threats to confidentiality of library use, and preparation of guidelines for libraries.

On other fronts, Council passed resolutions:

- to make 1990 national Year of the Library Trustee
- to support Senator Pell's resolution in the Senate directing the US government to employ permanent papers in the production of government documents
- to urge federal support of the upcoming White House Conference on Libraries and Information Services to the tune of \$6 million
- to oppose mandatory testing of library employees for AIDS
- to join in coalition to support legislation for better day care
- to take a leadership role in an effort to reestablish library service to earthquake-disabled Armenia
- to petition to the UN to pressure the Republic of South Africa for the release from prison of librarian Thiswilandi Rejoice Mabudafhasi
- to seek to have libraries classified as "educational institutions" and "information disseminators" for the purpose of waiving fees for Freedom of Information Act information requests
- to extend the "governmental activity" status recently applied to the National Institute of Standards Research Library to all federal libraries to end the trend toward privatization
- to support the NOW-sponsored march for Women's Equality on April 9, in Washington, DC, and to send a delegation to join
- to urge an end to exemptions to Title 44 requirements that government publications enter the depository program; with a special resolution on the Toxics Release Inventory Database
- to urge Congress to ensure access to government information produced in electronic formats
- to prompt reauthorization of LSCA as currently focussed, with only those

technical changes that would lead to greater efficiency, and to delay further changes in LSCA until after the White House conference has provided a forum for library community input.

As a complement to those legislation-oriented resolutions, Council took the time to mark a tribute to Eileen Cooke, who has run ALA's Washington office for the past twenty-five years. Her honesty, integrity and effectiveness have earned ALA an impressive reputation on Capitol Hill.

And so, my first opportunity to represent you as ALA Councilor was a rich experience. I shall present some thoughts on actions RILA might take in response to ALA's resolutions at the March Executive Board meeting. I also hope to expand on some of the items mentioned above in the pages of this Bulletin's future issues. If you would like more information about any of the resolutions, please feel free to contact me.

Howard Boksenbaum is Supervisor of Automation Services at DSLS, and RILA's ALA Councilor.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION DAY

Libraries and librarians across the country are encouraged to join in celebrating the public's "right to know" on Freedom of Information Day on March 16th. The event marks the birthday of fourth President James Madison, who said: "Knowledge will forever govern ignorance, and a people who mean to be their own governors must arm themselves with the power which information gives." For a copy of the American Library Association's "tip sheet" on how libraries can celebrate Freedom of Information Day, contact Frank Iacono at the Department of State Library Services.

calendar

- MARCH 16:** Freedom of Information Day
- MARCH 17:** RHILINET Committee, Cranston Public Library, 2-4 PM.
- MARCH 22:** RIEMA Annual Conference (Information: 253-3533).
- APRIL 9-15:** National Library Week
- APRIL 11:** National Library Week Legislative Day, Washington, D.C.

IN MEMORIAM

LINDA ALDRICH, librarian at Bristol High School, passed away on February 13th after a long battle with cancer. In addition to her more than sixteen years of dedicated service in the Bristol school system, Linda was active in state, regional, and national associations. Her work on behalf of the Rhode Island Educational Media Association stands out as a particularly shining example of her spirit and dedication. She was RIEMA's project manager for the development of a much needed library media curriculum guide and served as president of RIEMA in 1987-88. In her memory, RIEMA has created the Linda Aldrich Leadership Award, which will be presented yearly at its May meeting to a person demonstrating outstanding leadership in the library media field. RILA extends deepest sympathies to her family and friends.

jobline

The Rhode Island Library Association has established a minimum recommended salary of \$11.54 per hour, or \$21,000 per year for a full-time beginning librarian in 1989.

CATALOG/REFERENCE LIBRARIAN: Rhode Island School of Design. Responsibilities: Catalog and classify library materials in RLIN (3/4 time); assist with reference service in an art school library (1/4 time). Qualifications: ALA accredited MLS; undergraduate degree in art history or studio art preferred; reading knowledge of at least one modern European language; three years of library experience, preferably in technical services; knowledge of on-line cataloging (RLIN or OCLC) and automated systems. Available July 1, 1989. Salary: \$22,500 minimum, excellent benefits. Send application, resume and three references by April 1, 1989 to Carol S. Terry, Director of Library Services, Rhode Island School of Design, 2 College Street, Providence, RI 02903. Equal Opportunity Employer.

CHILDREN'S SERVICES LIBRARIAN (Librarian I). For \$2M-renovated William Hall Library, due to reopen July 1989. Library serves a neighborhood population of 15,000 in a growing suburban system. ALA-MLS required. Experience preferred. Proficiency in puppetry, storytelling, and/or music desirable. Responsibilities include materials selection, collection development, programming, reference, and supervision of library in absence of Branch Librarian. Schedule includes two evenings per week and every other Saturday. Starting date: April 9, 1989. Salary range: \$21,075-\$25,648. Benefits: Paid health, dental, and life insurance; 22 vacation days; 11 holidays, and provision for pension. Send letter of application and resume, including names of three references by February 22, 1989, to James T. Giles, Library Director, Cranston Public Library, 140 Sockanosset Cross Road, Cranston, RI 02920. An Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR: Qualifications - MLS; Administrative experience preferred. Supervisory skills and ability to work effectively with staff and public essential. Duties: responsible for all phases of library operation including materials selection, personnel administration, budgeting, programming, public relations, and planning. Salary - dependent on qualifications and experience. Send resume and letter of application to: Mrs. Virginia Sullivan, Chairman, Board of Trustees, Pearle L. Crawford Memorial Library, Kennedy Drive, P.O. Box 136, Dudley, MA 01570.

editor's notebook

It is Monday morning, February 13, the time I had set aside to write the "Editor's Notebook" for the March issue of the *Bulletin*. I had planned to share with you some thoughts I had on library cards and libraries as they were so eloquently used in the recent Trinity Rep production of "The Boys Next Door." Perhaps I can come back to those thoughts another time.

Bill Bergeron died early yesterday morning, and I am finding it difficult to think about anything in the same way as I did twenty-four hours ago.

For the hundreds of you who knew or worked with Bill on numerous library projects in Rhode Island, I do not have to summarize his many contributions to our profession. I can only offer you my own memories of Bill, as a colleague and as a friend.

I first heard Bill Bergeron's name mentioned when I worked on the reference staff of the Pawtucket Public Library in 1979-1980. Pawtucket was one of the few libraries in the state open on Sundays then, and the Sunday staff was composed of those willing to give up a Sunday to serve a very busy public. Bill was one of those.

Two years later, I joined the Intellectual Freedom Committee, of which Bill was a dedicated member, and later Chair. During the years we served on the IFC together, Bill was one of our most conscientious members. It was he who, one year as we floundered in our attempts to come up with a RILA Conference program, just happened to find a speaker from Roger Williams College, ready and willing, to speak on academic freedom. Bill introduced that speaker, as he had so many others, as well as serving often as one of our IFC program panelists.

Any member of the IFC committee of the last ten years will always remember Bill on May 1, when traditionally the Committee holds its monthly meeting at the Oaklawn Library, followed by May Breakfast at the Oaklawn Baptist Church. Bill always made arrangements for that morning, and joined us, even after leaving the Committee. Bill left the Committee, by the way, only because he felt he had contributed all he could, and had no new ideas.

And that is the way I think of Bill, as a careful thinker, who wrestled with the problems of our profession. Bill and I worked closely last year in a new capacity. As Treasurer of RILA, Bill was privy to a great deal of the problems and paper-work basic to producing each issue of the *Bulletin*. He was, at all times, responsive, helpful, supportive, even if it meant giving up his lunch to rush a check to the Post Office to cover a mailing.

More than the detail work of getting out the *Bulletin*, I remember a long conversation with Bill following the Peat Marwick presentation of the Rhode Island Library Study. Bill had gone home and read the working papers that supported the Study, and was concerned by the implications in them. As I listened to his concerns, I remember thinking of how deeply Bill cared about library issues and problems, and of how thoughtful he was about them. Life is not all action or reaction, but sometimes, caring, pondering, weighing the issues within, and eventually coming to an inner truth. Bill thought and cared about truth.

I cannot speak of Bill Bergeron now without bringing in a personal note. Having worked with Bill closely on the IFC Committee, and with Fran Farrell at the Providence Public Library, I know I speak for many of us when I remember the sheer joy we felt when they were married five years ago. Their happiness and life together made us all happier.

And more personally still, both Bill and Fran, separately, and then together, were very supportive of that other half of my life, the music half. They both attended my first recital last June. I cherish that evening for many reasons, but not least among them, the loving support they gave me on that night.

On behalf of all of us at RILA who knew and worked with Bill Bergeron, we extend our deepest and most heartfelt sympathy to Fran. We are grateful, beyond words, to both of them for their passionate and eloquent support of libraries in Rhode Island. I am grateful for having known Bill and shall miss him deeply.

bulletin board

- CLAN (Cooperating Libraries Automated Network) has voted to dispense with plans to utilize CLSI's CD-CAT product. The CD-CAT has been plagued with various technical problems and delays and CLAN now will proceed to draft an RFP (request for proposal) as a first step in finding a new vendor.

- RIEMA, the Rhode Island Educational Media Association, has announced its 16th Annual Conference scheduled for March 22nd at the Knight Campus of the Community College of Rhode Island. "Information Power: Partnerships, Planning, and Programs," is the theme of the conference. Renowned author Richard Peck is the featured luncheon speaker and keynote speaker will be Ruth Toor, editor of School Librarians' Workshop and a school library media specialist from New Jersey. Ms. Toor will address the issue of creating flexible scheduling in school library media centers. The conference takes place from 7:30 AM to 4:30 PM. Registration information is available from Harriet Lapointe, Conference Chair, by calling 253-3533.

- The American Library Association will sponsor a delegation to participate in the March for Women's Equality/Women's Lives on April 9, 1989, in Washington, D.C. The march is being coordinated by the National Organization for Women (NOW) and will involve a large number of organizations in a demonstration for women's rights. At the ALA Mid-winter Meeting in January, the ALA Council voted to support the march. The ALA

Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship (COSWL), chaired by Gail Warner, is coordinating the ALA delegation. Individuals who are interested in participating in the march should contact Cynthia Johanson, Library of Congress, Marc Editorial Division, Washington, D.C. 20540, (202) 707-5261. Further information on meeting time, basic accommodations, and location will then be forwarded to participants. NOW is also sponsoring a Congressional Lobby Day for women's rights on Monday, April 10. COSWL will obtain additional information on these efforts for those who might like to participate. ALA members may also wish to combine involvement in the above activities with the ALA annual legislative day in Washington, D.C. on April 11.

- Book discussion programs are alive and well throughout Rhode Island's public libraries, and perhaps, there is no library where this is more true than the Barrington Public Library. At the present time two programs are underway, and a third is starting soon. The programs include: "A Short Story Discussion Series," "Consider the Source," the Department of State Library Services-sponsored program featuring books with mythic themes, and "The Power of Myth," a discussion series using Bill Moyers' video interviews with Joseph Campbell. More information about any of these programs is available from Lauri Burke at the library.

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