

University of Rhode Island

DigitalCommons@URI

RILA Bulletin

Rhode Island Library Association

10-1990

Bulletin of the Rhode Island Library Association v. 63, no. 10

RILA

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/rila_bulletin

Recommended Citation

RILA, "Bulletin of the Rhode Island Library Association v. 63, no. 10" (1990). *RILA Bulletin*. Book 190.
https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/rila_bulletin/190https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/rila_bulletin/190

This Book is brought to you by the University of Rhode Island. It has been accepted for inclusion in RILA Bulletin by an authorized administrator of DigitalCommons@URI. For more information, please contact digitalcommons-group@uri.edu. For permission to reuse copyrighted content, contact the author directly.



Rhode Island Library Association Bulletin

Volume No. 63 No.10

ISSN:0146-8685

OCTOBER 1990

VOLUNTEERS IN RHODE ISLAND LIBRARIES

The NELA Annual Conference program on volunteer programs in libraries (September, 1989) stimulated some interesting discussion and prompted the RILA Bulletin Publications Committee to investigate Rhode Island volunteer programs. With the help of John Fox Cory, Cranston Public Library, it compiled a questionnaire which was sent to seventy-five public, health, and historical libraries. Forty responses were received. The questionnaire, with statistics and comments follows:

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. Does your library use volunteers?
If no, why not? Very small, part-time operation. | Yes 37 | No 3 |
| 2. Is there a Coordinator of Volunteers?
If yes, is this a separate position?
If no, who has this responsibility? Usually a librarian, often the Director. Coventry Public Library has a literacy coordinator who is paid by a literacy grant. | Yes 20
Yes 7 | No 17
No 19 |
| 3. Is the Coordinator of Volunteers also a volunteer? | Yes 3 | No 25 |
| 4. Do you recruit your own volunteers or are they referred from other agencies, such as RSVP, VIA?
Most volunteers come from local community action groups programs, the Red Cross or are scouts, senior aids, students doing internships from colleges, Friends of the Library, and "whoever offers." | | |
| 5. Do you have an application for volunteers? | Yes 17 | No 20 |
| 6. Do you check references of volunteer applicants? | Yes 7 | No 27 |
| 7. Does your library accept placements from the Rhode Island Attorney General's Adjudication Division? | Yes 20 | No 14 |
| 8. Do you have job descriptions for volunteers? | Yes 12 | No 24 |

9. Does the volunteer sign a work agreement indicating a commitment of a certain number of hours per week, or such other relevant information? Yes 6 No 30
10. Does your library use a formal orientation procedure for new volunteers? Yes 6 No 29
11. How are volunteers trained? By regular library staff or other volunteers?
Regular staff - 34. Other volunteers - 2.
12. How many volunteers work in your library?
An average of 23.63 volunteers worked in each library. A few libraries had over 100, while most had three to ten. The health libraries each had one volunteer.
13. How many hours per week does each volunteer average?
The average was 3.86 hours per week.
14. Please check types of volunteers you have volunteering?
Under 13 years of age - 6 Referrals from other agencies - 11
Teenagers - 12 Librarians - 4
18-65 years of age - 32 Other - 0
65 and over - 24
15. Please check the types of tasks volunteers perform at your library:
Book repair - 19 Data input - 4
Assisting with programs - 16 Shut-in service - 6
Running programs - 4 Graphics/signage - 5
Friends of the Library - 11 Research - 2
Clerical duties - 24 Public Service - 5
Shelving/retrieval of materials - 26 Public Relations - 2
Fundraising events - 10 Tutoring - 4
Circulation duties - 6 Answering telephones/receptionist - 3
Other: There were twenty-two different duties listed, including: literacy program support, other than tutors, cleaning and repairing A-V materials, voiding coupons in magazines so patrons won't cut them out, book processing, special projects - shelf-reading and moving, inventory, weeding with supervision, vertical file maintenance, filing and pulling catalog cards, dusting, copying and window displays.
16. When working at the library, does the volunteer wear a badge or some other symbol which indicates he/she is a volunteer? Yes 7 No 28
17. Do the volunteers at your library work alone? Yes 23 No 10
Do the volunteers at your library work with regular staff? Yes 27 No 2
Do the volunteers at your library work with other volunteers? Yes 15 No 7
18. How long do most volunteers stay at your library (days, months, years)?
It ranges from a few months to several years with younger recruits tending to stay a short time, while older recruits stay years.
19. Do you have evaluations of volunteers? Yes 5 No 27
20. Do you hold exit interviews with volunteers who leave the program? Yes 4 No 29

21. Does your library recognize volunteers for their efforts with a special annual event or some other expression of appreciation? Yes 25 No 10

Please explain. Some librarians give credit to volunteers in the newsletter or annual report, or have recognition programs with a food-oriented activity - tea, breakfast, dinner, or send a "thank you" note from a Trustee. Others give certificates, awards, token gifts or a plaque for long-time volunteers.

22. Should librarians volunteer? Yes 23 No 9

Why? Librarians should volunteer in libraries: to update librarianship skills which would help them return to the job market; to perform special projects or to fill short-term needs; if they are retired and want to stay active in the library community without a great time commitment; if, in their judgment, it is something they want to do; "Because they require less training;" and, an additional comment, "In small libraries, at least, a good portion of our work is volunteer, in our own libraries!"

Why not? "Librarians are overqualified for the jobs most volunteers are asked to perform." "We feel there is the potential of awkward situations arising."

Comments:

Of the forty libraries responding, all but three use volunteers in one capacity or another. Some libraries have tried outside volunteers but find they have neither the staff nor the time to train and supervise them. Other libraries feel they are forced to take volunteers for political reasons when they do not need them. Many libraries do not actively seek volunteers because the results are inconsistent, sometimes more trouble than they are worth. The consensus was, most libraries feel that volunteers help complement regular staff in the performance of their duties. It was made quite clear that volunteers should not be used to fill staff positions, or to perform the same duties as a union (or non-union) staff member. Volunteers serve their purpose if used properly and sensitively.

Compiled by: Norman Desmarais Providence College Library	Tanya Trinkaus Glass Coventry Public Library	Pamela Stoddard University of Rhode Island
--	--	--

ATTAINING FAIR SALARIES

Are you concerned about the salaries librarians receive?

Come hear two public library directors, with proven track records in attaining fair salaries for their staffs and themselves, describe a variety of methods that can be employed to convince the appropriate people that fair salaries pay off. Topics include minimum salary guidelines, pay equity, salary surveys, selecting statistics, and negotiating benefits along with salaries.

Appropriate for all levels of Library personnel.

Lively description of real life situations.

Plenty of time for questions.

This FREE program is sponsored by the RILA Personnel Committee and will be presented by Susan Bullock, Director of the Meriden Public

Library, and Arlene Bielefield, Director of the East Hampton Public Library, both in Connecticut.

TIME AND PLACE

Friday, October 19, 1990, 9AM-12 Noon
Conference Room East
Community College of Rhode Island
Knight Campus, Warwick, RI

Attendance at this program will be limited to fifty (50) and preregistration is required.

Reserve your place now by calling or writing:

Dan Austin
Providence Public Library
225 Washington Street
Providence, RI 02903
Phone: (401) 455-8060

PROVIDENCE PUBLIC LIBRARY HOSTS RUSSIAN EXHIBIT

The Providence Public Library will host a Soviet World War II Book Exhibit entitled "Toward Peace Forever 1945..." from October 10th to 19th. The Exhibit, which includes six hundred and fifty books written in Russian and other languages, a soldiers' button collection and a photography display, is co-sponsored by the Rhode Island Center for the Book. Providence is one of only three sites to be chosen for the Exhibit, the others being Dallas and Chicago.

On Wednesday, July 18, a press conference was held at the PPL to announce the Exhibit

and to introduce Yuriy Zhizhin, Director of Exhibitions and Fairs, Soviet State Publishing Committee - Goskompechat. Zhizhin traveled to Rhode Island to preview the site and to be available for interviews with the media and interested librarians.

As part of this preview of the Exhibit, the Bulletin presents the remarks made by Zhizhin that day. He spoke in the Barnard Room of the Library, against a wall draped with flags of both the Soviet Union and the United States.

Memory is the best teacher, as they say in Russia. For sure, Americans have the same saying. Even now, forty-five years after the end of World War II, the people in the Soviet Union remember the horrors which the war brought to them. The war touched every family with its death scythe, which is why the Victory Day is a holiday having a special meaning, a holiday of memory of the past and a day of responsibility for our future. It is only a pity that few eye-witnesses of those flaming years have lived through them; even heroes are powerless before time. Only books - this priceless compilation of the man's memory - keep living.

Some volumes dealing with the years of great ordeals, defeats and victories have been collected in the book exhibit "Towards Peace Forever. 1945-..." prepared for American book-lovers by the USSR State Committee for Publishing. The exposition presents books, pamphlets, albums, posters and documentary photos made by military correspondents.

Here, of course, we show not all that we wished to bring to your beautiful country. Nevertheless let's agree that an exhibition is not a museum of battle glory or a library; moreover this exhibition will be held in three areas of the United States: Chicago/Springfield, Providence and Dallas, and each of the states will receive a replica of the exposition as a good-will sign.

A number of publications is dedicated to the battlefield cooperation between the Soviet Union and the United States. The Soviet people keep in their memory, heroic deeds of American fliers, sailors and soldiers who did not return from the battle fields of this horrible war. A mother's sorrow is the same everywhere - in Russia and the United States. It is not by chance that our two great powers were the co-founders of the United Nations' organization, whose principal task is to struggle against a military threat.

In May of 1945 the victory salute did not open the era of friendly relations between our countries, although this victory was greatly appreciated in Moscow and Washington. Only today, after long years of tension and errors, do people understand that the world without arms means the last chance. This simple truth makes us look at each other anew. The handshaking of the Soviet and American Presidents erases bastions of reciprocal mistrust and suspicion and inspires hope. There has been signed an agreement on medium- and short-range missiles; our countries have destroyed a whole class of deadly arms and made the first step towards the real disarmament and peace forever.

This new era is understood very well by our colleagues, book publishers from the United

States, who, on these same days, are holding an exhibit entitled: "Fighting For Freedom: USA in World War II." Residents of the Soviet cities of Brest, Odessa and Volgograd will receive an opportunity to see this exhibit.

Arrangement of such traveling book exhibits within the frames of the Agreement between the USSR State Committee for Publishing and the USA Information Agency has become a good tradition. The Soviet and American anniversary exhibitions of this year are the third ones in the series of measures of such kind, and we should like to hope that in future our contacts will give the USA/USSR audiences an opportunity to better understand the society and culture of the other.

Zhizhin was accompanied by Robert Schadler and Rhonda E. Boris, representing the U.S.I.A.

The Library is planning a number of programs,

concurrent with the Exhibit. Further information can be obtained from Beth Watson Sousa or Heidi Gudmundson, Public Relations Department, PPL. (455-8090/8055)

+ + + + +

RILA FALL CONFERENCE SET FOR OCTOBER 29th

This year's RILA Fall Conference will be held on Monday, October 29, at the Ray Conference Center at Butler Hospital in Providence. The conference will feature four morning-long workshops on designing children's spaces, information sources on business and industry, problems and pleasures of gift books, and stress management.

Following the morning workshops there will be a buffet luncheon at noon with the RILA Annual Meeting's convening at 1:30 p.m. At the Annual Meeting the newly elected Executive Board will be introduced. Bruce Daniels will also speak about the upcoming Governor's Conference on Library and Information Services.

"Redesigning Children's Spaces" is the title of a workshop Dr. Janice Meyer of Roger Williams College will present. The program will help librarians apply theories of child development to the practical task of arranging the children's areas in their libraries. Dr. Meyer will show how knowledge of the conditions that foster learning at various stages of development can lead to decisions about color and design that will create an appealing space for children. The program will emphasize inexpensive modifications to existing areas, making it useful to librarians who do not anticipate extensive remodeling or expansion of their buildings.

Sources on corporate, financial, and statistical information will be described by experts and used by participants in a program called "Get Bullish on Information!". Marcia

DiGregorio, Collection Development Librarian and former Head of the Business, Industry and Science Department at the Providence Public Library, Peter Holscher, Reference Librarian, also at PPL, and John Etchingham, Head of Reference at the University of Rhode Island Library, will demystify such things as researching a corporation's genealogy, tracking obsolete securities, and defining and finding various statistics. Key purchases for libraries trying to build business collections will also be suggested, giving consideration to limited library budgets.

Even if a library has never received a gift of hundreds of engineering texts from the 1920's in two-foot-tall bundles tied with old neckties, librarians may want to attend the program "Gifts: Boon or Bust?". A panel of librarians will discuss its experiences with gifts. They will address library gift policies, procedures for soliciting and receiving gifts, as well as the ways gifts are used. The panel includes Norman Desmarais, Acquisitions Librarian, Providence College Library; Karen Taylor, Director, East Greenwich Free Library, James Giles, Director, Cranston Public Library, Jacqueline Cooper, Librarian, Rochambeau Branch, PPL, and Anne Toll, Director, Newport Public library.

Information supplied by Carol Drought, Assistant Director, Warwick Public Library, and Conference Chair.

+ + + + +

THE WILSON INDEXES

When You Need an Answer Fast and it Has to be Right

Offering broad coverage, unparalleled accuracy, and unmatched currency, the Wilson Indexes are your key to important literature in business and law, science and technology, art, education, the humanities, the social sciences, and general reference.

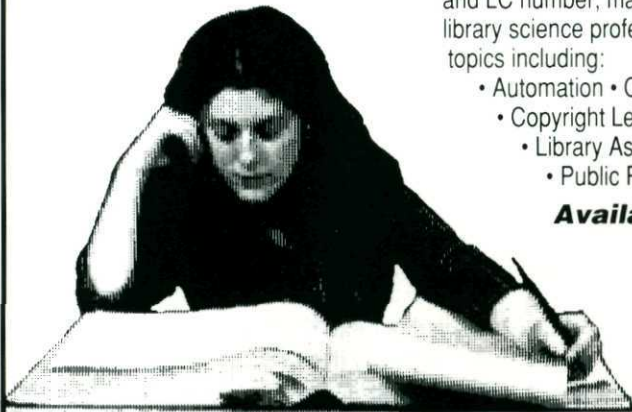
Now you can search these renowned indexes in print, online, on CD-ROM, and on tape.

LIBRARY PROFESSION & EDUCATION

Library Literature

"The definitive index in the field."

—AMERICAN REFERENCE BOOKS ANNUAL



A single-alphabet subject-author guide to current information in leading English and foreign-language publications in virtually all areas of library and information science, *Library Literature* offers thorough and reliable indexing of selected state library journals; monographs; conference proceedings; American and foreign periodicals; research papers and unpublished library school theses; and pamphlets. Complete bibliographic data, as well as extensive cross-referencing, analytical indexing of conference proceedings and collected works, an index to current book reviews, and a checklist of monographs cited including price, ISBN, and LC number, make *Library Literature* an invaluable source of information for library science professionals. *Library Literature* covers a wide range of current topics including:

- Automation • Cataloging • Censorship • Circulation Procedures
- Copyright Legislation • Government Funding • Information Brokers
- Library Associations • Online Searching • Personnel Management
- Public Relations • Rare Books Publishing.

Availability

In Print: Six issues (February, April, June, August, October, & December); annual cumulative volume.

Retrospective coverage from 1921 to date; sold on the service basis (book budget).

Online, CD-ROM, and Tape:

Coverage from 12/84.

CD-ROM annual subscription \$1,095.

Education Index

"A cornerstone for information and research in the field of education."

—AMERICAN REFERENCE BOOKS ANNUAL



With thorough and reliable indexing of articles in 339 leading international English-language periodicals, yearbooks, and monographic series, *Education Index* encompasses all areas of interest to today's educators including administration, teaching methods, and curriculum. A single-alphabet, subject-author index, *Education Index* covers every age and sector of the educational community from preschool and kindergarten, through high school and college, to continuing, adult, and special education. *Education Index* covers such topics as:

- Audiovisual Education • Classroom Computers • Comparative Education
- Educational Technology • Government Funding • Language & Linguistics
- Literacy Standards • Multicultural/Ethnic Education • Physical Education & Athletics • Psychology • Religious Education • Science & Mathematics
- Social Studies • Special Education • Student Counseling • Teacher Education
- Teacher/Parent Relations • Vocational Education.

Availability

In Print: Ten monthly issues (no issues July & August) cumulated in March, June, & December; annual cumulative volume.

Retrospective coverage from 1929 to date; sold on the service basis (periodical holdings).

Online, CD-ROM, and Tape:

Coverage from 6/83. CD-ROM annual subscription \$1,295.

To Order, or for more information on these or any of the other Wilson Indexes, simply call toll-free:

1-800-367-6770



THE H. W. WILSON COMPANY

950 UNIVERSITY AVENUE, BRONX, NY 10452

BULLETIN SEEKS NEW STAFF

During the summer months, the Publications Committee has spent considerable time in analyzing and re-structuring its management structure. In doing so, the Committee has revised two of its positions. At its last monthly meeting, RILA's Executive Board authorized the Committee to submit to the membership the availability of the following positions:

Managing Editor

The Managing Editor, along with the Editor-in-chief and the Publications Committee, is responsible for maintaining the routines that lead to the publication of the Bulletin.

As such, the Managing Editor will:

Serve as Chair of the Publications Committee, and notify members of meetings, as well as supply them with Minutes and notification of future meetings.

Serve as "ex officio" member of the Executive Board, and as such, supply quarterly reports, an Annual Report, an estimated Budget, and, in general, serve as liaison between Committee/membership, and the Board.

Is responsible for collecting materials on the first and fifteenth of every month and forwarding them to the Editor-in-chief.

Is responsible for forwarding the finished copy from the Technical Editor to the printer and from there, to the Mailer.

Is responsible for maintaining Bulletin records, including handling payment of Bulletin bills, including maintaining the Post Office account.

Will maintain Bulletin files, i.e., copies of invoices, and respond to such routine correspondence as may be required.

Will receive a stipend set currently at \$120 per issue.

Technical Editor

The Technical Editor is responsible for the appearance of the Bulletin. The Technical Editor assembles all features, articles, ads, and regular columns and determines the order

they will appear, using guidelines established by the Publications Committee. He/she produces the final copy of each issue and submits it to the Editor-in-chief for proofing. The Technical Editor then makes all corrections, and additions, including pagination, "flashes," or graphics. Final camera-ready copy is given to the Managing Editor for delivery to the printer.

RILA's Executive Board has set the stipend for these services at \$10 an hour.

Any RILA member interested in any additional information on Bulletin job descriptions should contact any member of the Committee. For those interested in applying for either of the positions above, please contact Judith Paster at 467-8898, or in writing to 52 Seaview Avenue, Cranston, RI 02905.

bulletin board

- The RILA Personnel Committee is sponsoring a program entitled "Attaining Fair Salaries: Part Logic/Part Magic," on Friday, October 19, at CCRI's Conference Room East on the Knight Campus from 9 AM to 12 Noon. Speakers will be Susan Bullock, Director of the Meriden (CT) Public Library and Arlene Bielefield, Director of the East Hampton (CT) Public Library. Topics will include: minimum salary guidelines, pay equity, salary surveys, selecting statistics, and negotiating benefits along with salaries. Preregistration for this free program is necessary and is done by contacting Dan Austin at Providence Public Library at 455-8060.

- On September 17, Governor DiPrete announced his vision for a streamlined and more effective state government structure. The Governor's proposal would reduce the number of departments from the current eighteen to twelve.

The Department of State Library Services would be abolished as a separate department and an office in the Department of Administration would be assigned the responsibilities for library services. At this point in time, the specific details to imple-

ment the Governor's vision have not been developed and should evolve over the coming months, pending, of course, the result of the upcoming election.

- The Greenville Public Library Board of Trustees is hosting a lecture series. The first guest speaker will be journalist and columnist, Martha Smith, of the Providence Journal, appearing on October 14th at 3 p.m. at the Smithfield High School Auditorium. Tickets are \$5.00 per person, and can be purchased at the Greenville Library's circulation desk or at the door that day. All proceeds will benefit the library's Expansion Fund for furniture.

- The second annual Rhode Island Festival of Children's books and Authors presented by the Fleet Charitable Trust and WJAR-Channel 10 will be held Saturday, October 27 from 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. and on Sunday, October 28 from 12:00 P.M. to 5:00 P.M. at the Lincoln School, 301 Butler Avenue, Providence, RI. There will be books for sale, autographing sessions, presentations by the authors and illustrators and activities for children. Featured authors and illustrators include Steven Kellogg, Ann Jonas, Bernard Waber, Chris Van Allsburg, David Macaulay, Jerry Pinkney, Johanna Hurwitz, James Howe, and Scott Corbett.

Admission is \$2.00 per day. All proceeds will benefit Women & Infants Hospital. For advanced tickets, send a self-addressed stamped envelope with a check payable to Women and Infants Hospital to:

Women and Infants Hospital
Book Festival
P.O. Box 9696
Providence, Rhode Island 02940-9696

For more information, call (401) 739-5440 or (401) 277-2726.

people

President Bush recently announced his intention to nominate CAROL DiPRETE, Director of the Roger Williams College Library and RILA Past-President, for membership on the U.S. National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS). NCLIS is a permanent, independent Federal

agency charged with advising both Congress and the President on matters relating to national library and information policies and plans.

DENISE GIBBONS has been appointed Young Adult Services Librarian and Branch Head of the Rumford Branch of the East Providence Public Library System as of September 1.

"DISCOVERING OUR VALUE - ASSESSING OUR WORTH"

by Linda Walton

The North Atlantic Health Sciences Libraries (NAHSL), a regional chapter of the Medical Library Association is pleased to announce that this year's annual conference will be held in Providence at the Omni-Biltmore Hotel. The conference will run from Sunday October 21, 1990 to Wednesday October 24, 1990. The Planning Committee for the conference consists of members of the Association of Rhode Island Health Sciences Librarians (ARIHSL).

NAHSL has approximately 280 members and over 125 attend the annual conference each year. The conference is rotated each year to a different New England state (with the exception of Vermont-New Hampshire who plan the conference jointly).

We are very pleased to announce that our keynote address this year will be given by Herbert White from the Indiana University School of Library and Information Science. We are looking forward to an informative and thought-provoking address on the "Value-Added Concept in Health Science Librarianship." We are also having "round table" discussions for the first time. We have asked individuals from within our association to lead discussions on various projects or topics which are happening in their libraries. Individuals can sign up for the round table of their choice.

Tuesday's program begins with the Business Meeting followed by a Research Forum. David King from the University of Kentucky College of Library and Information Science will speak on "Assessing the Role of Hospital Libraries in the Clinical Decision-Making Process."

This lecture will be followed by Ann McKibbon from McMaster University who will discuss her research on "The Value of End-User Training in Meeting Physicians' Information Needs."

The rest of our conference will be devoted to continuing education classes. We have two half-day classes on Tuesday: "Personal File Management" by Frank Kellerman (Brown University) and "Searching for Good Quality Material" by Ann McKibbon (McMaster University). Wednesday will be an all-day class given by David King (University of Kentucky) on Evaluation of Library Services.

An Exhibit Hall will be available with twenty-four exhibitors attending. We also have several social events planned including a Welcome Reception, Cocktail Party, Banquet, and a Farewell Tea. Many of these events are graciously sponsored by our Exhibitors.

We are looking forward to an exciting and educational conference for 1990. If you would like more information about our conference, please contact Rayna Bowlby (Brown University Sciences Library) 863-3181 or Tosca Carpenter (Newport Hospital Library) 846-6400 x1802. Single day registration is available. Please contact Rachel Carpenter (Rhode Island College, J.P. Adams Library) 456-8125 for registration information.

Linda Walton is Librarian at the Butler Hospital, a member of the Planning Committee for the NAHSL Conference, and a member of the Publications Committee.

calendar

OCTOBER 10-19: Soviet Book Exhibit, Providence Public Library.

OCTOBER 19: RHILINET Committee, Cranston Public Library, 2 PM.

OCTOBER 26: State Archives Dedication of New Facility, 337 Westminster Street, 12 Noon.

OCTOBER 27-28: Rhode Island Festival of Children's Books and Authors.

NOVEMBER 12-18: National Children's Book Week.

COLUMBUS QUINCENTENARY CELEBRATION BEGINS

"Christopher Columbus: From Genoa to the New World," a two-year lecture series and poster exhibition commemorating the five-hundredth anniversary of the European discovery of America, began in Rhode Island on October 6 at the Cranston Public Library.

A joint project of the Department of State Library Services and the John Carter Brown Library, the celebration has been funded by the Rhode Island Committee for the Humanities (RICH) and the Hospital Trust National Bank.

As an introduction to the project, the Bulletin is pleased to present the following account, written by Norman Fiering, Director and Librarian of the John Carter Brown Library, Margaret Shea, Supervisor of Adult Services at DSLS and Project Supervisor, and Frances Farrell-Bergeron, Project Coordinator.

- - - - -

The forthcoming global commemoration of the fifth centenary of the meeting of worlds that occurred in 1492 will surpass in sheer magnitude and variety all prior human celebrations of any kind. There is an implicit understanding that today the planet earth has become a single interdependent unit. This unification and integration began at a precise moment in 1492 when permanent contact was first made between inhabitants of the two halves of the globe who were hitherto totally unknown to each other and indeed totally unimagined. Such an event can happen only once in human history and, despite its many tragic consequences, is cause for acclaim.

Our prideful hindsight leads us to assume that this meeting of totally separate and insular worlds was somehow "inevitable" and that, if Columbus had not launched his venture into the unknown in 1492, it would have happened anyway--in 1496, or 1500, or 1510. Yet a case can be made that it is only in the writing of history that the sequence of events in the past becomes inevitable; the past itself, as lived, is always wholly contingent and unpredictable. In consequence, because of this contin-

gency, the actions of individual men and women can create vast shifts in the orientation of humanity, earthquakes that change the landscape of history permanently. It was only after, and largely because, Columbus dared to sail due west into the completely uncharted ocean, that scores of voyagers followed. Indeed, within only a few decades, the Magellan expedition circum-navigated the globe.

We can only speculate how and when contact between Europe and the Western Hemisphere might eventually have occurred, had Columbus not ventured into the unknown in 1492. It is unlikely that the initiative for crossing the oceans would have come from the Americas, and Europe in the sixteenth century, without Columbus's initial voyage as a stimulus, could easily have become deliberately insular, as did China. It is entirely possible that centuries could have passed without the opening of contact between the Western Hemisphere and Asia, Africa and Europe. But in 1492, Columbus made the voyage; because of one man, in one year, the two worlds met.

"Christopher Columbus: From Genoa to the New World" is a project designed to commemorate this signal event. Inevitably it must focus on one man. Columbus will always be a magnet for human speculation, reflection, argument, debunking, and emulation, because he is one of that small number of individuals in human history who by some odd chance take those unprecedented steps that put him or her at the very center of epochal change.

At the same time, the project will examine from various perspectives the astonishing--and still felt--repercussions of the discovery of the New World: the creative commingling of several cultures; the tragic suppression and even eradication of others; the exponential growth of knowledge about the size, shape, and make-up of the earth, as well as the development of methods to represent, catalog, and index such knowledge.

"Christopher Columbus: From Genoa to the New World" is an exhibit/lecture series which will travel to public libraries and other public venues for a two-year period from October, 1990 to October, 1992. The exhibit consists of thirty panels in full color which illustrate Christopher Columbus's life and achievements. Included are photographs of geographical locations related to Columbus's activities in both the Old and New Worlds, enlarged re-

productions of rare archival documents, and ancient and modern nautical charts. The exhibit was given to the John Carter Brown Library in 1988 by the Italian National Committee for the Celebration of the Fifth Centenary of the Discovery of America. Rhode Island is one of only three American sites to be so honored--the others being the University of California at Los Angeles and the City of Columbus, Ohio.

Using the exhibit as both focus and general reference point, scholars in the humanities will present lectures exploring a variety of themes connected to the meeting of the Old and New Worlds. There will be three lecture "packages," one of which will be presented in each public library sponsoring the exhibit.

= = = = =

Participating libraries in the exhibit are Barrington, Central Falls, Coventry, Cranston, Cross Mills, East Providence, Kingston, Lincoln, Middletown, Newport, North Kingston, Pawtucket, Providence, Warwick, and the Westerly Public Libraries.

Programs will include such topics as: "The New World Described in Maps, 1492-1800," led by Susan Danforth, Curator of Maps and Prints, John Carter Brown Library; "Indians, Ecology and the Environment," led by Shepard Krech III, Anthropology Department, Brown University and Director of the Haffenreffer Museum; "The Influence of Religion in the Discovery, Exploration, and Settlement of the New World," discussed by Jeannine E. Olsen, History Department, Rhode Island College.

The exhibit will conclude with a grand finale at the State House in October of 1992. The exhibit and all lectures are free and open to the public. Additional information is available from Gail Mastrati, DSLS (277-2726) or Frances Farrell-Bergeron (739-8089).

WELCOME, NEW MEMBER!

RILA welcomes a new institutional member, John Carter Brown Library, Brown University.

editor's notebook

The Bulletin's feature this month focuses on the use of volunteers in libraries. Stimulus for the questionnaire grew out of a successful program on volunteers at last year's NELA Conference. At the program's conclusion, I found myself remembering some of my own experiences as a volunteer in libraries, and some of the conclusions I have drawn from those assignments.

I have served as a volunteer in libraries on several different occasions. As a library school student, volunteerism was encouraged by my mentors as a way of becoming knowledgeable in the field as well as making myself known as a prospective employee.

During this period, I volunteered at two different kinds of libraries. The first was the library of the Rhode Island Historical Society, where I compiled a comprehensive list of its holdings of Rhode Island fiction. Under the supervision of a librarian, I also gained additional experience using the OCLC terminal at DSLS to determine the relative rarity of the library's holdings. Not only did I gain professional "contacts," but I also enriched my own skills in librarianship.

My second experience occurred at the Pawtucket Public Library. Once I had ascertained that I wished to be reference librarian, I made several calls to larger libraries in the Providence area to inquire as to the availability of learning reference skills through volunteering to work with staff. Pawtucket accepted my offer, and I drove up to the Sayles Library for a preliminary interview.

Once again, I was supervised by the Head of Reference and her staff. Initially, I observed their handling of questions. However, the day came when I was put on my own to sink or swim. At first, I was petrified when the phone rang, or someone approached my desk. However, as the days wore on, I could feel myself beginning to "relax" into the job, and even enjoy what I was doing. It was about that time when the Head of Reference pointed out to me that indeed I had become a real reference librarian who could stand on her own two feet, and handle questions like a "pro." What I gained from this volunteer assignment was professional growth. It also led to my first professional paying position.

Later in my career, when I left full-time

library work, I sought out meaningful professional experience on a part-time basis. Initially, these experiences were volunteer positions.

I was offered the opportunity to volunteer my reference and collection development skills in the Pembroke and Rockefeller libraries at Brown. However as the weeks wore on, many of the professional staff expressed reservations about using a "professional" volunteer to perform professional, essential duties, such as book selection and ordering.

I, too, found myself feeling "used" when I would be the only professional staffing the reference desk during the busy lunch hour. After communication between staff and myself, it was determined that I be designated a "consultant," and paid a stipend for my services. Not only did I gain a monetary reward, but I also gained much insight into university library policy and procedures.

As fiction selector at the Providence Public Library, one of my "pet" projects was the management of a collection designated as "old fiction." This collection consisted of unusual novels, often little-known works of well-known authors, or works which were popular in another era but had not stood "the test of time." Some were "last copies" of valuable period literature.

After retiring from the PPL, I volunteered to analyze and annotate this collection. My offer was accepted, not only because the work needed doing, but it was regarded as an "unessential" task, which no paid staff person had time to do. What I gained from this assignment was hours of sheer enjoyment as I pored over the books and reference tools to determine their usefulness to PPL's vast collections.

My other volunteer experience was less rewarding. Through Volunteers in Action, I agreed to organize and set up a professional collection at the Rhode Island Association for the Blind. I went to its offices on specifically stated days and hours, and was able to "weed" the collection as well as make recommendations for basic works to acquire to make the library useful to its staff.

I also met with staff members to solicit "input," and was supervised by a staff member. I did gain a feeling of accomplishment at the Association, but gradually discerned that they really needed a professional librarian on a paid permanent basis. As a volunteer, I did not feel either equipped or motivated to perform that service for them.

By this time, I had also established myself as a free-lance reference librarian, and I was being hired by libraries on a regular basis to provide specific services in a circumscribed time frame, i.e. a maternity leave.

What conclusions can be drawn from these experiences? First for the volunteer, there should be tangible rewards: such as professional growth, satisfaction with accomplishing significant work, or enhancement of a professional "network" of "contacts" in the field. It should be noted that volunteering often leads to employment, especially when starting out in the field.

From the library's point of view, it is essential that volunteers be recruited for the skills they possess and for their enthusiasm for the task and/or the institution. Volunteers must be supervised and evaluated on a

regular basis. They must be treated as equals and as "part of the team." Duties and obligations must be clearly spelled out and adhered to.

It is also necessary, in lieu of payment, to reward the volunteer in some way, whether with a corsage (as in Pawtucket), or an offer of a professional recommendation (as at the PPL). Other kinds of rewards are suggested in the questionnaire.

One last thought concerning "professional" volunteers, is that as librarians we must identify for ourselves clearly what constitutes a professional task that should be paid for, and what does not. It does not follow that professionals do not volunteer; other professionals, including those in such fields as medicine, law and education, do volunteer work.

Perhaps, the "bottom line" to this discussion of professional volunteerism is that we know what we are doing and why we are doing it. We need to be able to justify our professional activities by a professional standard of conduct to ourselves and to our colleagues.

The RILA BULLETIN is published ten times per year by the Rhode Island Library Association. Managing Editor: Judith Paster, 52 Seaview Avenue, Cranston, RI 02905 (467-8898); Co-Feature Editor: Norman Desmarais, Providence College, Phillips Memorial Library, Providence, RI 02918 (865-2241); Co-Feature Editor: Tanya Trinkaus Glass, Coventry Public Library, 1672 Flat River Road, Coventry, RI 02816 (822-9100); News Editor: Frank Iacono, DSLS, 300 Richmond Street, Providence, RI 02903-4222 (277-2726); Technical Editor: Veronica Thomas, East Providence Public Library, 41 Grove Avenue, East Providence, RI 02914 (434-2453); Jobline: Pam Stoddard, Government Documents Department, URI Library, Kingston, RI 02881 (792-2606); Advertising Manager: Linda Walton, Butler Hospital, 345 Blackstone Boulevard, Providence, RI 02906 (456-3869); Subscriptions Manager: John Bucci, William Hall Library, 1825 Broad Street, Cranston, RI 02905 (781-2451). A current list of RILA Executive Board members and committee chairs is available in Volume 62, No.12. Subscriptions: free to members; \$12/year in U.S.; \$20/year foreign. Deadlines: 1st of the month for features and 15th of the month for everything else. Advertising: \$130 full page; \$65 half page; \$40 quarter page; \$15 business card size. Change of address: members contact the Membership Committee Chair, Deborah Mongeau, Government Documents Office, URI Library, Kingston, RI 02881 (792-2606). Subscription correspondence: contact Subscriptions Manager. For further information contact the appropriate Editor. Printing by Lewis Graphics, 636 Park Avenue, Cranston, RI 02920 (941-7540). LC 57-26438.

Rhode Island Library Association
300 Richmond Street
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-4222

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Providence, R.I.
PERMIT NO. 210

PROV COLLEGE ARCHIVES LIBRARY
PHILLIPS MEMORIAL LIBRARY
RIVER AVENUE & EATON STREET
PROVIDENCE RI 02918