

University of Rhode Island

DigitalCommons@URI

RILA Bulletin

Rhode Island Library Association

10-1991

Bulletin of the Rhode Island Library Association v. 64, 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. 64, no. 10" (1991). *RILA Bulletin*. Book 200.
https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/rila_bulletin/200https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/rila_bulletin/200

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. V. 64 N. 10

ISSN:0146-8685

October 1991

Preservation and the White House Conference On Library and Information Services July 9-13, 1991

BY ROBERT E. SCHNARE

The Second White House Conference on Library and Information Services (WHCLIS II) was held in Washington, DC July 9-13, 1991. The conference was the culmination of years of work to discuss issues critical to library and information services. For the past few years, states, territories, interest groups, etc. were meeting to develop issues and place them in the form of recommendations. These recommendations were sent to the White House Conference staff who organized them into areas of similar interest. Several months prior to the recent conference, selected individuals were invited to Washington to synthesize the numerous recommendations that had been put forth.

Preservation was one of the topic groups. The four individuals invited to try and cope with the Preservation resolutions were Jan Merrill-Oldham, Head, Preservation Department, University of Connecticut; Carolyn Harris, Director, Conservation Education Programs, School of Library Service, Columbia University; Barclay Ogden, Head, Conservation Department, University of California at Berkeley; and George Farr, Director, Office of Preservation and Access, National Endowment for the Humanities. They have described the process as literally being locked in a room at Dulles Airport for too long a time. These individuals took the ninety preservation recommendations submitted by everyone and culled them to eight. These eight were:

- PRE01 - National Preservation Policy
- PRE02 - Federal Support for Statewide Preservation Programs
- PRE03 - Preservation Education and Training
- PRE04 - Housing and Storage of Library and Archives Collections
- PRE05 - Quality and Longevity of Information Media
- PRE06 - Preservation Research, Development, Standards and Procedures
- PRE07 - Preservation of Specialized Federal Libraries and Archives
- PRE08 - Public Awareness of the Preservation Crisis

These recommendations were then sent to the delegates of the conference for their consideration. Another preservation recommendation was listed under National Information Policy and dealt with a facility to handle preservation in tropical climates.

In Rhode Island, I worked on the preconference and ran for election as a delegate to the White House Conference. Delegates were divided into four categories: professional, library supporters, government officials, and citizens. I was elected as a governmental official from Rhode Island.

In order to build support for the preservation effort, I began to network delegates through three different methods. I attended a meeting of New England and Middle States delegates in April at Plymouth, Massachusetts. During this time, I asked that all delegates interested in preservation meet at breakfast. A fledgling network was born. One of the delegates who responded was the Reverend Richard Darling, an alternative delegate from Pennsylvania. The second avenue was to work through the Federal Library and Information Center Committee (FLICC) Preservation Working Group at the Library of Congress. The members of this group would prove invaluable. Mary Levering, the director of FLICC and Chris Zirps, assistant to the executive director, were a great help in obtaining needed information. I worked with this group to prepare for the Federal pre-White House Conference held November 26-27, 1990 at the National Library of Medicine in Bethesda, Maryland under FLICC auspices. I compiled a Preservation Bibliography that was given to all who attended the Federal pre-conference. The bibliography and the paper presented on preservation by Alan Fusonie of the National Agricultural Library were later mailed to all White House Conference delegates.

The third approach was suggested by Merrily Smith of the Library of Congress' National Preservation Program Office. Together we drafted a letter that was sent to all the delegates by the National Institute for

Conservation under the signature of the director, Lawrence Reger. The letter explained the pressing need for preservation and included a piece of brittle paper encapsulated in mylar. The letter, I later learned, made quite an impression with the delegates. I also spoke at the American Library Association meeting in Atlanta at the Preservation of Library Materials Section Discussion Group. Barclay Ogden was in attendance and helped explain the White House Conference to those present.

On Wednesday, July 9, the White House Conference began. The delegates in attendance from the states, territories, and Indian nations numbered 699 voting delegates and over 300 alternates, honorary, and delegates at large. We had a welcome from Barbara Bush, a speech given by Marilyn Quayle at lunch, and were addressed by President Bush after lunch.

After the speeches, delegates were separated into their topic groups. One of the first acts of my topic group, preservation, was to elect two members to serve on the Conference Recommendations Committee (CRC), and I was one of the two elected. The other was Robert Misesy of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The CRC was composed of twenty elected (two from each topic group) and nine appointed delegates. The mission of the CRC was to take the recommendations proposed, establish a priority, and return them to the delegates to be acted upon.

On Wednesday night, we met in our topic group until 10 p.m. We returned to the topic group on Thursday morning for more work. Preservation had nine recommendations. These nine were a consolidation of the ninety preservation recommendations sent in by the states, territories, and interest groups. My self-appointed goal was to consolidate them into two or three meaningful recommendations. It was a democratic process, and after consideration discussion, somehow a plan of action prevailed. In the end we had three recommendations.

The first was a statement describing the need for a National Preservation Policy; the second was Federal Support for Statewide Preservation Programs; and the third called for the Final Report to be printed on permanent durable paper. We also introduced a public policy statement to ensure that preservation would be included in the public policy section. The draft version of the final report, however, did not contain a section on public policy. In addition, Karen Muller, executive director of ALCTS of the American Library Association, and I drafted a statement on the preservation of non-paper media. This was read by Dick Myers of the National Archives at the Open Forum, an opportunity to present issues for the upcoming decade.

On Thursday night, the Conference Recommendations Committee began its work. The CRC took 765 recommendations and reduced them to 134. The first CRC session on Thursday ended for me early Friday morning. I was back in my topic group at 8:00 a.m. The CRC then met from 11:30 until 6:00 p.m., took

a break for dinner and to ask the delegates to vote on the top fifteen recommendations. The CRC went back into session at 10:00 p.m. and ended at 4:00 a.m. on Saturday morning. Once again we were all back in session by 8:30 a.m. Saturday morning. The delegates met as a bloc and received the final 134 recommendations with the top fifteen ranked. They also received a breakdown of how the recommendations clustered. Preservation recommendation #1, a National Policy, was voted number six of the top fifteen. I was euphoric! The delegates then began a long debate on the recommendations which started at 8:30 a.m. and ended at 7:30 p.m. In the end, the process refined the recommendations, and over 94 were adopted. Preservation recommendations #2 and #3 were also adopted. The speaker for the banquet Saturday was James Billington, the Librarian of Congress. The banquet was a rather festive affair as the delegates celebrated the end of the White House Conference.

The White House Conference was an amazing experience. I had a chance to meet people from all walks of life and places. The CRC consumed over twenty hours of my time, but it was well worth it. While I was specifically elected to represent the Preservation topic group, as a federal librarian I was also aware of issues affecting federal libraries and school libraries since my wife is a school librarian. One of the many people I met was Senator James Varn of Iowa, also on the CRC. I also renewed acquaintances with the author John Jakes with whom I had worked in the past.

The success in achieving recognition for the preservation recommendations was the result of teamwork and many hours of labor. Special thanks go to Jan Merrill-Oldham, one of the four synthesizers who kept me well informed in regard to preservation recommendations, and to Paul Koda, Preservation Librarian of the University of Maryland, who was the moderator of the Preservation Topic Group. Paul did an outstanding job. Others who deserve recognition are Judith Weaver, alternate delegate from Massachusetts; Elisabeth Knauff, delegate from the Federal Library and Information Center Community; Mindy Shepherd, delegate from Missouri; and Robert Frase, an observer who provided vital background on permanent paper legislation. Those people previously mentioned and those whose names I failed to mention also merit acknowledgement for their support of preservation. Although a small group, we succeeded in accomplishing our objectives.

My one last accomplishment was being elected as a Rhode Island representative on the White House Conference Library and Information Services Task Force. This group will work to achieve the goals of the White House Conference and plan a future conference. I plan to keep working for preservation.

The Rhode Island delegates arrived home on Sunday afternoon, and I slept Sunday and most of Monday.

Robert E. Schnare is Director of the Naval War College Library.

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.

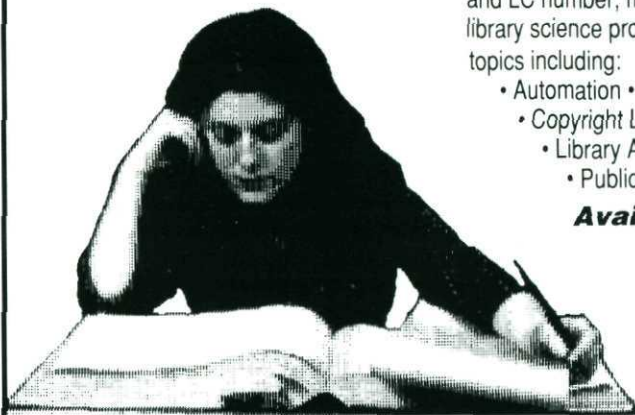
Now you can search these renowned indexes in print, online, on CD-ROM, and on tape.

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 • Publishing • Rare Books.

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 (monthly disc) \$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 • Multi-cultural/Ethnic Education • Psychology • Religious Education
- Science & Mathematics • Social Sciences • 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 (monthly disc) \$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.**

Outside of the U.S. and Canada, call 1-212-588-8400.



THE H. W. WILSON COMPANY

950 UNIVERSITY AVENUE, BRONX, NY 10452

Preservation: Why the Concern?

BY SUSAN MILLARD

I am often asked these days by friends both old and new, "What is it you're doing now?"

To which I reply, "I'm a Preservation Planning Grant Administrator at the Department of State Library Services."

I enjoy watching their faces. They try to disguise their blank looks and stares with nods of understanding, but a steady stream of questions usually follows.

For example:

Preservation? What is that?

O you're involved with an historic restoration project.

A preservation planning grant for libraries?

O you're doing historic restoration of old library buildings!

"Well, not exactly," I say politely.

Although it would be easier at times to respond with a smile, I am compelled by necessity to speak, to set the record straight, to clarify and to explain. Besides, as a librarian, I have a low tolerance for incorrect information.

My first impulse is to ask, "How much time do you have?" For some reason there are those who exit rather rapidly after this remark.

To those who remain, I begin to explain that while I support historic restoration, I am only interested in library buildings in so far as they provide safe, stable environments for the materials which they contain. I am primarily concerned about the "preservation" of library, manuscript and archival collections within libraries and other institutions.

Initially, I became personally involved in preservation by way of art history and archeology. I value works of art in all media and feel a strong connection to artifacts and images created by ancient and contemporary cultures.

Library school added to my appreciation and understanding of illuminated manuscripts and rare books. They are not only beautiful, but are valuable as artifacts and represent a portion of our history that cannot be replaced. I soon learned, however, that preservation is not limited to rare books and antiquities, but applies to general collections and electronic media as well.

Every profession has its jargon; the field of preservation is no exception. In the interest of simplicity, limited time and space, let's start with some basics.

Preservation is not:

- Pickling or canning fruits and vegetables
- Freeze-drying for 4,000 years
- Suspended animation
- A new fitness program
- A cellular rejuvenating night cream
- Just for "special collections" or historic records
- Any more time-consuming than other library activities
- The responsibility of preservation librarians alone

Preservation is:

- A way of thinking; a philosophical approach to collection care.
- An essential collection management tool
- Concerned with continued access to information by providing stable environmental conditions, reducing the negative effects of light and atmospheric pollutants and promoting proper collection care and handling practice
- Valuable for library and archival collections
- Disaster preparedness
- An integral part of daily library activities
- The responsibility of everyone who uses library and archival collections
- The focus of a planning grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to the State of Rhode Island

History

Although the field of preservation is a relatively new area of librarianship, preservation issues are a matter of national concern. Surveys have shown that between 25 and 40 percent of the oldest, richest collections in the United States are deteriorating. Some of these materials are unique and cannot be replaced. Others are unavailable because the titles are no longer in print. Replacement can be costly, whether one obtains a reprint, a microform or a photocopy.

Damage to library materials may be physical and/or chemical in origin. Physical damage may occur when the item is carelessly handled. For example, spines may be broken when pressed too forcefully on a photocopy machine or pages may be torn or soiled by abuse in the book drop or improper shelving. Chemical damage is due to a combination of certain conditions.

The demand for inexpensive paper and paper products during the 1850s led to the use of wood pulp instead of cotton or linen rags, because wood was more plentiful. In order to accept ink however, the pulp was not only bleached to remove impurities, but chemicals known as sizing were added. The use of alum rosin sizing causes paper to become acidic over time. Fluctuating temperatures and humidity in the housing and storage environment increases the chemical reaction. The paper becomes discolored, brittle, and can no longer be handled. The Commission on Preservation and Access has aptly described this condition as "slow fires."

Materials printed or published before 1850 will remain intact with careful handling and storage, while those published after 1850 have a limited life expectancy. While chemical damage is impossible to reverse, there are preservation activities which can be practiced which will slow down the deterioration process. Leading experts in the field have informed us that the lower the temperature, the more constant the relative humidity, the less light they are exposed to, and the cleaner the air, the longer the materials will last.

A growing concern is leading to the development of new technologies to address the problem and is encouraging the production and use of permanent durable (non-acidic) paper in the publishing industry. This will insure that future generations will not have to

RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION FALL CONFERENCE

Ray Conference Center
Butler Hospital
Providence, R.I.
Monday, November 4, 1991

**Not For Directors Only : a guide to political action
in Rhode Island**

Your library has probably lost funding in the past few years, either from the state, the federal government, or your local source of funding. These cuts have affected all library services : children's storyhours have been reduced, reference staff have been diminished, book budgets have been decimated. If you believe your job is valuable, learn how you can effectively communicate your value to the powers that be, and restore, or possibly increase funding.

9:00 Coffee, Registration

9:30 - Keynote Speaker -**U.S. Representative Ron Machtley**

- Victoria Lederberg. Chair, COLA
- Rhode Island lobbyist
- R.I. Senator Walter J. Gray
- James T. Giles, RILA Government Relations Committee

For registration, call Brian Walsh, Pawtucket Public Library, 725-3714.

address the brittle paper problem to the extent that we are experiencing now. However new information technologies will undoubtedly contain the seeds of other preservation mandates.

NEH Preservation Planning Grant

The National Endowment for the Humanities has become a leading activist in the area of preservation. The concern and support of the National Endowment for the Humanities, has given Rhode Island a unique opportunity to gather information to be used in identifying preservation needs, problems and priorities within our libraries and records repositories. Then we may develop continuing programs to help preserve the materials which document our rich cultural and historical heritage.

The impetus for the grant project entitled "Planning a State-wide Preservation Program for Rhode Island" came as a direct result of a National Conference on the Development of State-wide Preservation Programs. The state participants at the Conference called a meeting to explore and to formulate plans for the establishment of a state-wide council to stimulate interest in and coordinate programs relating to preservation issues. At its initial meeting it was agreed that a state-wide preservation plan was necessary, and that the Department of State Library Services would be the logical agency to direct the planning program.

With direction and coordination from the Rhode Island Council for the Preservation of Research Resources, the project staff (including four task forces) are working through the Department of State Library Services to perform the duties associated with the grant. The Council and the task forces' members are representative of libraries, state agencies, archives and historical organizations. The grant period will continue for one year (May, 1991-April, 1992).

The Needs Assessment Task Force has developed a survey/questionnaire which will be sent to libraries and other institutions throughout the state in October, 1991. The Preservation Needs Assessment Survey is designed to elicit the preservation needs and priorities of each institution. Information gathered from this survey is essential in order to assist in the development of programs to meet the preservation needs of participating institutions.

Disaster preparedness is a fundamental component of preservation planning for libraries and archives. Having a plan and a trained staff familiar with disaster response and recovery procedures is an essential part of collection care. The Disaster/Preservation Services Task Force has almost completed its compilation of a workbook style manual to assist libraries and institutions throughout the state in the development of their own disaster response and recovery plan.

The Education and Training Task Force will address a variety of issues and concerns by creating a plan to meet the particular preservation needs of libraries, archives, and historical societies. A workshop session is planned for this fall on Basic Preservation:

Collection Care and Maintenance. Others to follow will include Library Binding Standards, Historical Records Management and Grant Funding Sources. Plans are also being made for a major Rhode Island Preservation Conference to be held in the spring of 1992. At this conference the preliminary preservation planning report will be presented and discussed. Recommendations for the establishment of a state-wide preservation program will be evaluated.

The Implementation Strategy Task Force is reviewing and evaluating the preservation plans of other states in preparation for developing the preservation plan for Rhode Island.

In addition, a Resource Library on Preservation is being created and will be a part of the professional reference collection at the Department of State Library Services. It will provide current information on preservation issues of concern to libraries and other institutions throughout the state.

Efforts are being made to expand communication and cooperation among the various interest groups in order to realize, establish and strengthen the "common ground" which exists in terms of preservation concerns. As information sharing is a major and primary part of the Preservation Planning Grant activities, the Rhode Island Council for the Preservation of Research Resources and the project staff invite and encourage all who are interested in preservation issues to participate in the process by engaging in dialogues, offering suggestions, asking questions, and attending workshops.

Providence Public Library To Visit New York Public Library

A trip to New York is being planned by the Providence Public Library for November 2, 1991. The day's highlights include an exclusive tour of the New York Public Library with the rest of the afternoon free for shopping, dining, or theatre.

The cost is \$35 and covers motorcoach transportation, coffee and pastry on the way to New York, and a private tour of the Library. The bus will depart the Providence Public Library at 7:30 a.m., arrive in the city at 10:30, and the tour of the Library is from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. The bus departs New York at 6:00 p.m. and arrives back in Providence around 9:30 p.m. For more information, call the Library's Development office at 455-8003.

Proposed Change in RILA Constitution

RILA members will be asked to vote on a proposed new Article II of the Association's constitution at the RILA Business Meeting scheduled for November 4th. The proposed revision was approved by the RILA Executive Board at its June 4th meeting and is meant to be an updated mission statement for RILA. Article II in its current form and in its revised form are as follows:

Article II (Current)

The objective of the Association shall be to promote library and information services in the State of Rhode Island and to encourage interest in libraries, information centers, and librarianship.

Article II (Proposed)

The Rhode Island Library Association is a professional and educational organization of librarians, library staff, trustees, and library supporters, whose purpose is to promote the profession of librarianship and to improve the visibility, accessibility, responsiveness and effectiveness of library and information services through

J O B L I N E

Assistant Head, Reference Department

Expertise in information technologies; general reference in the humanities and social sciences; previous supervisory experience desirable; salary: \$29,550-36,900; apply by December 1 with letter, resume, and the names of 3 references to Geneva Ferrell, Department of Human Resources, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912.

B U L L E T I N B O A R D

The Rhode Island Chapter of the National Society of Fund Raising Executives (NSFRE) is sponsoring a two-day "First Course in Fundraising" commencing on November 21 at the Providence Marriott Hotel. Keynote speaker for the conference will be John E. Marshall, III, President of the Kresge Foundation. Registration includes the First Course manual with summary notes, critical articles, and sample forms; luncheon on November 22 (National Philanthropy Day) featuring the keynote speaker; and a special meeting with local foundation representatives. For further information contact Simone Joyaux at 397-2534.

•••

The First National Conference on Family Literacy, sponsored by the National Center for Family Literacy in Louisville, Kentucky, will be held April 12-14, 1992 at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. For further information, contact the National Center for Family Literacy, 401 S. 4th Avenue, Suite 610, Louisville, KY 40202-3449.

•••

A new Freedom to Read poster is available from the American Library Association's (ALA) Office of Intellectual Freedom. The poster includes photos and the revised text of the Freedom to Read Statement. The statement was originally issued in 1953 and was revised most recently in 1991 by the ALA Council and the Association of American Publishers' Freedom to Read Committee. The poster is available for \$2.50 from the Office of Intellectual Freedom, ALA, 50 East Huron Street, Chicago IL 60611, 312-280-4223.

•••

Corrections from Mary Zammarelli, Director of Library Services at St. Joseph Hospital concerning our recent article on medical reference sources. Ruthann Gildea is the former Director of Library

Services at Landmark Medical Center and not the former Director of the Center at large. The correct title of our organization is the Association of Rhode Island Health Sciences Librarians, and the correct acronym is ARISHL.

The *Bulletin* apologizes for these errors.

C A L E N D A R

NOVEMBER 4: RILA Fall Conference and Business Meeting, Ray Conference Center, Butler Hospital, Providence

NOVEMBER 11-17: Children's Book Week.

NOVEMBER 25-30: ALA Midwinter Meeting, San Antonio, Texas.

P E O P L E

JAMES AYLWARD, administrator of the Naval Education and Training Center Libraries in Newport, has been elected President of ALA's Armed Forces Libraries Round Table.

DEBORAH BARCHI, former Director of the Hope Library in Scituate, has been named Director of the Coventry Public Library.

RICHARD L. CHAMPLIN, who served at the Redwood Library in Newport since 1951, recently retired. He began his career at the Library as its Cataloger, became Assistant Librarian in 1966, and had served as Librarian since 1988.

GINNY MCKEE, Chief of Children's Services at Providence Public Library, recently was elected to the 1993 Newbery Award Committee of the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC).

EILEEN SOCHA is now Assistant Director of the East Providence Public Library after serving for many years as the Director of the George Hail Free Library in Warren.

LINDA WALTON, former librarian at Butler Hospital, has been appointed Associate Director of Region 8 of the National Network of Libraries of Medicine at the University of Connecticut Health Center in Farmington.

L E T T E R

To the Editor:

Thank you for the letter and the copy of the RILA Bulletin. I am honored to have my name referenced in your publication. If you want me to give my testimonial speech for any public relations rally, please give me a couple days to prepare and I am at your beck and call. In the meantime, let me know how I can contribute some time to the benefit of your organization and the public library. I am a Certified Electronic Technician and a member of the International Association of Certified Electronic Technicians. If you have any office machines, electro/mechanical equipment or anything else waiting for repairs, I will be glad to volunteer my labor to try to repair them.

Paul R. Lavoie
East Providence

EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

As you might imagine, an important item on the agenda of each meeting of the Publications Committee which produces the RILA BULLETIN is a discussion of possible features for future issues. There are, of course, certain events and topics that demand attention on a regular basis, and with these there is no problem for us in allotting space. One of the more important goals of the Bulletin is to keep members of the Association informed on the library community in Rhode Island and the role that the Association plays in promoting the profession of librarianship.

Although we are a specialized group of dedicated professionals and supporters, we are also diverse. Hence, the Bulletin must reflect professional interests which are often highly refined and sometimes quite narrow in scope. Some topics discussed at length may present issues, problems, and concerns with which many of us have little contact. This, however, offers us the opportunity to learn something new and therefore enhance our own professionalism.

Putting a finger on important, neglected, or just simply interesting topics is the challenge the Publications Committee faces at every meeting. While we would like to think that we accomplish this fairly well, there is always the fear of self-delusion. While we are always open to suggestions, it is important every now and then to make a direct appeal to the readership. So, I'm soliciting.

As you can see from reading this issue, we have printed a letter. This is something of a rare event for letters to the Bulletin are quite rare. Comments about the Bulletin or possible contents normally come by word of mouth. They are usually unsolicited but nonetheless appreciated. On this occasion, however, the Publications Committee is actively soliciting your suggestions for topics that might be pursued in future issues. We are fearful that some of our readers have been patiently waiting to see a topic addressed only to find time after time that it has been ignored.

It may also be the case that some of you find the direction of the Bulletin a tad narrow in scope since it rarely wanders beyond the confines of professional librarianship. It has been suggested, for example, that we present occasional articles written by librarians about their favorite bookstores. The idea here is that many of us know of obscure little places dedicated to narrow topics or offering materials rarely seen elsewhere, sometimes even in libraries. This is a possibility the Publications Committee has actively considered, but you can appreciate that it would require the participation of our readership.

In appealing for suggestions, the Publications Committee is also willing to consider tampering somewhat with the format of the Bulletin. While most of the regular features of the Bulletin are necessary, even sacred, this column is not one of them. It has been proposed, for instance, to change the Editor's Notebook into a Members' Notebook. We, and we assume the readership, would like to hear from different libraries throughout the state. Too often our knowledge of what is going on elsewhere is confined to the news of some major event or change in daily operation. It might be nice to hear from you for no good reason at all, telling readers of the Bulletin what is going on at your library or, for that matter, what your professional concerns and hopes are. It could, in short, be a way for readers of the Bulletin to report, perhaps even editorialize.

These are, of course, only suggestions. But I think that you can gloss from this the concerns of the Publications Committee. It is our responsibility to make the Bulletin as informative and interesting as it can possibly be. We must be responsive to our readership while remaining the organ of professional librarianship in Rhode Island. But we must hear from you. I urge you to share your ideas with us by contacting any of the members of the Publications Committee. We look forward to your suggestions.

The RILA BULLETIN is published nine times per year by the Rhode Island Library Association. Managing Editor: John Fay, State Library, State House, Providence, RI 02903 (277-2473); Feature Co-Editors: Norman Desmaris, Providence College, Phillips Memorial Library, Providence, RI 02918 (865-2241); Wendy Knickerbocker, James P. Adams Library, Rhode Island College, Providence, RI 02918 (456-9605); News Editor: Frank Iacono, DSLS, 300 Richmond Street, Providence, RI 02903-4222 (277-2676); Jobline: Pam Stoddard, Government Documents Department, URI Library, Kingston, RI 02881 (792-2606); Advertising Manager: Elizabeth Johnson, Cranston Public Library, 140 Sockanosset Cross Road, Cranston, RI 02920 (943-9080); Subscriptions Manager: John Bucci, William Hall Library, 1825 Broad Street, Cranston, RI 02905 (781-2450). A current list of RILA Executive Board members and Committee Chairs is available in Volume 64, No. 1-2. Subscriptions: free to members; \$15/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, Donna Roberts, 1503 Middle Road, East Greenwich, RI 02818 (885-3174). Subscription correspondence: contact Subscriptions Manager. For further information, contact the appropriate Editor. Technical Production: Verbatim, Inc., 769B Hope Street, Providence, RI 02906. Printing by Lewis Graphics, 1655 Elmwood Avenue, Cranston, RI 02920 (941-4444). 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

RITA H WARNOCK
271 DOYLE AVE
PROVIDENCE RI 02906