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Rhode Island Library Association Bulletin

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*"Of Internauts and Internets," "Surfing the Internet," "Appletalk over the Internet," "The Fruitful Tangled Trees of Knowledge," ...colorfully and imaginatively titled articles on **The Internet** - what some consider to be the networking wonder of the 90's - abound in library and technology journals. The RILA Bulletin decided to join the fray - but we decided to begin with the basics.*

*Three articles follow. 1) The article by Martha Kellogg is an introduction and overview of this thing called **The Internet**. 2) Patricia Brennan details, in poetry and prose, one librarian's experiences using **The Internet**. 3) Norman Desmarais presents an annotated bibliography of new and helpful resources.*

The Internet: Description, Origins, Implications for Libraries

BY MARTHA KELLOGG

The Internet: what is it? Where did it come from? How does it affect me? Librarians who want to bring the latest in information resources to their patrons need to know something about this new form of information technology. This article will briefly describe what the Internet is today, how it developed in the United States, and its potential for libraries.

The Internet: What Is It?

The Internet is a series of local and regional computer networks linked together by data communication lines. Anyone with a network address and computer (such as a microcomputer and a modem) can connect to a local computer network which in turn links to the many networks that together make up "The Internet." Because of the way the Internet developed, most universities and colleges today provide network addresses at no charge to their students and faculty. Commercial networks and local "free-net" systems also are beginning to provide a link to the Internet for individuals, schools, and libraries, even though they are not located at a university or research center. This group of computer networks is important to libraries because all kinds

of "data" in machine-readable form - including documents, indexes, databases, on-line library catalogs, journals, interactive discussion groups, etc. - are now available to persons who gain access to the Internet by computer.

Hundreds - perhaps thousands - of interconnected computer networks today span not only the United States, but also Canada, Europe, and Asia. Common standards and protocols allow different kinds of computers to communicate computer-to-computer in computerese while the human beings using them communicate with each other for the most part in ordinary human conversational language, typed on a keyboard. To send a message on the network, the computer puts the information into a "packet" addressed correctly to its destination at another computer. To access data available on the Internet, the user may log in by computer to a remote database to read, print, or download the desired information. The computers communicate so rapidly over the networks that messages can arrive at their destination almost instantaneously. If a recipient is not available when a message arrives, it is stored in an electronic file to be read later.

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your RILA membership?**

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The Internet: Where Did It Come From?

What we today call "The Internet" began as an experimental program funded by the Department of Defense (DOD) to link large computers for military purposes. The Advanced Research Projects Agency (ARPA) of the DOD installed the first packet-switched network (ARPAnet) in California in 1969. Although originally an experiment in packet-switching technology, the program soon became a service utility to the computer science research community. Instead of buying many expensive computers, researchers bought a few computers and shared them throughout the network.¹

The packet-switching project proved to be a huge success. Researchers in laboratories and universities in the U.S. started other local area networks which were linked through the ARPAnet backbone. The TCP/IP protocol supporting computer communication on a wide variety of networks was in use by the mid-1970s. Networks proliferated. ARPAnet split into two separate networks for military and civilian use in 1983. BITNET, a primarily academic network including most of the major universities in the U.S. and abroad, linked to the Internet. In 1985 the National Science Foundation (NSF) created five regional supercomputer centers, and in 1988 the NSFnet became the Internet's new "backbone." The number of connected networks in the Internet grew from about 60 in 1984 to 100 in 1985 to 500 in 1988. In April 1990 there were 4529 IP network numbers assigned and some of these represented dozens of interconnected local networks.²

NSF promoted universal educational access to the networks. It funded university connections on the condition that campuses promote network access to students and researchers and it prohibited commercial use of the networks. Consequently university users generally are provided Internet access at no charge. Use of the computer networks for information access took off in the late 1980s and early 1990s as more information became available electronically, common standards were developed, and microcomputer use became commonplace.

The Internet: Implications for Libraries

Although the Internet makes computerized access to information more readily available, its use is by no means completely self-evident. Commands must be learned and techniques mastered. The Internet itself is amorphous; it grows and changes continually so that the information itself as well as means of accessing it is always changing. As information resources on the Internet have proliferated, it becomes increasingly difficult to find and capture the relevant

bits needed. The librarian's role in the electronic information age may include both the provision of computer access to resources on the Internet and assistance in identifying and obtaining the information needed by the library's patrons.

¹Clifford A. Lynch and Cecilia M. Preston, "Internet Access to Information Resources," *Annual Review of Information Science and Technology*, v. 25, 1990, p. 276.

²Ibid., p. 279.

Martha Kellogg is Serials Librarian at the University of Rhode Island.

Librarians and the Internet

BY PATRICIA B. M. BRENNAN

There were three sharp librarians
To learning much inclined,
Who signed onto the Internet,
To search it, and to find
A useful image of the Net
To satisfy the mind.

The first approached the Internet
And happened there to see
A massive union catalog
Called MELVYL at U.C.,
"I see," quoth she, "the Internet
Is like OCLC!"

The next no sooner had begun
To sign onto the Net
When mail arrived in his account
"How lucky can I get!
My reference problem neatly solved
By colleagues I've never met."

The third discovered distant files
And cried, "What have we here?
The Internet has full-text books
And software without peer.
It's like a dream come true for instant access,
It is clear."

And so these sharp librarians
Propounded loud and strong
Each in their own opinion,
But then, before too long,
They realized each was partly right
And each was partly wrong.

With apologies to John Godfrey Saxe, author of
"The Blind Men and the Elephant"

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T H E H . W . W I L S O N C O M P A N Y

9 5 0 U N I V E R S I T Y A V E N U E , B R O N X , N Y 1 0 4 5 2

My excursions around the Internet over the last year have often resembled the preceding poetic explorations. Many false starts and poking about eventually resulted in acquisition of some useful networking skills and a body of rudimentary facts. But, you ask, "what's in it for me?" I can only answer with a description of what I've found in it for me, so far.

Hundreds, perhaps thousands, of specialized fora exist on the Net. ("Net" can be a nickname for the Internet – or any other network.) In Internet jargon, these fora are called newsgroups. On BITNET (a major network accessible by way of the Internet), they are called listservs or lists. Someone with a computer *hosts* or *owns* each forum. People with an interest in the topical focus of a forum *subscribe* to it. Subscribers receive all the messages *posted* to the forum, not just by other subscribers, but by anyone, right in their own electronic mailboxes.

I received a quick, complete answer to a tricky poetry-related reference question by posting my problem on a list called STUMPERS-L. Sure, I might have called various local colleagues, but I had no clear idea who among them might have both the collection resources and the time to assist with my problem. So, I tapped into a huge, national pool of reference librarians who subscribe to STUMPERS because they like a challenge. My problem was solved. My patron was awed and impressed. I was pleased as punch. What more could a reference librarian ask?

PACSL, the Public Access Computing Systems (in Libraries) list at the University of Houston, proved invaluable in assisting me in identifying quiet, sturdy printers for use in a reading room and in locating libraries using OCLC's FirstSearch which do not charge patrons for the service. Because more than one individual responded to each query, I had more data upon which to draw conclusions. If I had attempted this by telephone, I might have spent several hours over several days following leads and referrals, ultimately receiving only a fraction of the useful information.

As a once and future music specialist, I keep up with current events in the music area by subscribing to MLA-L: a list maintained by the Music Library Association at the University of Illinois. All the questions, comments, problems, and issues which music librarians post to the list come to my E-mail address automatically. In addition to continuing education, MLA-L supports the work of Association committees, including the one on which I serve.

Without the support that access to local, regional, and national level electronic mail provides, I could not effectively perform my committee work at the College, at NELINET, for the Music Library Association/New England Chapter, as well as other

professional responsibilities. E-mail avoids telephone tag; permits direct transmission of minutes, memos, and other committee business; and facilitates timely exchange of information about pending issues.

One of the most time-consuming and nerve-racking endeavors a librarian faces is the introduction of an online public access catalog. I find it very reassuring that I can reach out electronically to those colleagues who have already mastered the system my library is installing. So far, fellow Innovative Interfaces users on INNOPAC-L, a list at the University of Maine, have answered questions regarding synonym table construction and subject keyword indexing. Odds are there is a list focusing on the system you use.

And what better way to discover the good and bad features of an OPAC than to search it yourself? Several hundred libraries make their catalogs available via the Internet. MELVYL, the online union catalog of the University of California system, represents such a huge array of holdings that it has earned the nickname: "poor man's OCLC." Just think: millions of items and no fees for searching or downloading.

Lest you think that all this splendor belongs only to institutions with enough money to establish their computer as a *domain* (a computer with a unique address on a network), anyone can gain access to the Internet through CompuServe for less than \$10 a month.

Truly sharp librarians take heed: once you step through this electronic gateway, it's a jungle out there. No comprehensive directory of persons or institutions or resources exists for the Internet. Sorry, no authority control, no bibliographic control, and no owner to field complaints or answer questions. How does anyone find anything? Well – many, many partial lists are scattered around the Net to assist the networker in locating what he or she needs. One of the few well-constructed examples is known as the St. George/Larsen guide: a directory of Internet-accessible OPACs and library databases which includes log-in procedures as well as addresses. Space does not permit my listing more guides, but my Internet address is FACBRENNAN @ RIC.EDU if you'd like to know more.

My journey of discovery makes it clear to me that the Net needs the help of a few good librarians. Having been cobbled together in its infancy by scientists/hackers, the atmosphere of an arcane specialist's domain still permeates the structure of the Net and many of its resources. It's time librarians started "riding the Net", classifying and indexing this cornucopia of resources, permitting the Internet to become the information technology tool "for the rest of us."

Tish Brennan is Head Reference Librarian at Rhode Island College.

Recommended Resources on The Internet

COMPLIED BY NORMAN DESMARAIS

Frey, Donnalyn and Rick Adams. *!%@: A Directory of Electronic Mail Addressing and Networks*. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly & Assoc., 1990.

Contains two chapters. Chapter 1 (24 pp.) gives an introduction to electronic mail, explaining message format, address syntax, and network peculiarities. Chapter 2, *Networks* (270 pp.), forms the biggest part of the book. For each network, it gives the facilities available, contact information, address data, system architecture, future plans, and see also references. An update line indicates the currency of the data. A separate page contains a map showing area of operation and connections to other networks. It also indicates local sites and node names and IDs.

Internet World (formerly *Research & Education Networking*). Westport, CT: Meckler.

Monthly journal with news and articles about networking and the Internet.

Krol, Ed. *The Whole Internet User's Guide & Catalog*. Sebastopol, CA: O'Reilly & Assoc., 1992.

This book is full of useful information in a clear and concise format, although sometimes it seems that depth of coverage has been sacrificed to breadth. It covers the background on what the Internet is and how it works, including a chapter on what is allowed on the net; descriptions and examples of remote login, ftp, e-mail, and network news, finding software, finding someone, Gopher, WAIS, and World Wide Web; problems one may encounter; an impressive topical list of resources available; and getting a network connection. This book can serve as an introduction to the net and as a reference tool for resources and services that one may not already be familiar with. The only real problem may be that as the network develops and resources change, this guide may become out of date.

Lane, Elizabeth and Craig Summerhill. *An Internet Primer for Librarians and Educators: A Basic Guide to Internet Networking Technology*. Westport, CT: Meckler, 1992.

This volume provides a description of the current state of the Internet, as well as the interim and proposed NREN, and includes basic information on network concepts and usage. In addition to providing background information on the current state of the "national network", it addresses selected "how to" issues ranging from necessary equipment to operating

system specifics. While other sources to Internet services exist, they are difficult to access and incomplete. By collecting the best of currently available information and using documentation principles designed for effective communication of technical concepts, the Primer is a one-stop source for all information professionals beginning to access the Internet.

Library Resources on the Internet. Chicago: American Library Association, Reference and Adult Services Division

In preparation.

Schuyler, Michael. *Dial In 1993: An Annual Guide to Online Public Access Catalogs and Databases*. Westport, CT: Meckler, 1992.

This directory lists the dial-in numbers to online public access catalogs (OPACs) and other locally mounted databases from hundreds of libraries worldwide. Entries include library name, address, data on special collection strengths, network membership, Internet addresses, loan policies, requirements and restrictions on use of the online services, and details about additional online information available.

Search Sheets for OPACs on the Internet: A Selective Guide to U.S. OPACs Utilizing VT100 Emulation. Marcia Klinger Henry, Linda Keenan, and Michael Reagan. Westport, CT: Meckler, 1991.

Search sheets summarize the information a user needs to know to access library online public access catalogs. This volume includes samples of search sheets from a number of the major OPAC software systems now in use. Also includes a survey of logon and search techniques and an appendix of sample help screens to the systems discussed.

Late-breaking additions:

Kehoe, Brendan P. *Zen and the Art of the Internet: A Beginner's Guide to the Internet*. 2nd ed. Prentice Hall. 1993

Strangelove, Michael and Diane Kovacs. *Directory of Electronic Journals, Newsletters and Academic Discussion Lists*. Assoc. of Research Libraries, 1992.

Tennant, Roy and others. *Crossing the Internet Threshold: An Instructional Handbook*. Library Solutions Pr., 1993.

Also - the entire September 1991 issue of *Scientific American* was devoted to the Internet.

Norman Desmarais is Acquisitions Librarian at Providence College, and Features Editor RILA Bulletin.

BULLETIN BOARD

The Rhode Island Educational Media Association, in conjunction with the Rhode Island Department of Education, is proud to announce its 20th annual conference program to be held on **FRI-DAY, MARCH 5, 1993** at The Inn at the Crossings, Warwick, RI from 7:30a.m.-4:00p.m. **REJUVENATE, INNOVATE, EDUCATE, MOTIVATE, ARTICULATE** is the theme for the 1993 conference.

Workshops offered throughout the day include: Developing multi-cultural collections; writing for professional journals; CD-ROM how to begin; integrating literature in the classroom; telecommunications in schools; resource based instruction; Learning Link and Internet, etc. A large exhibit area with representatives from professional library media vendors will be available to demonstrate their products and answer questions. Video and poster contest participants will also display their wares.

Registration information may be obtained from Susan Bryan, Conference Chair, by calling 401-949-4230 or writing to 26B Tamarac Drive, Greenville, RI 02828.



The Annual Conference of the Government Publications Librarians of New England will be held on March 15th at the New England Center at the University of New Hampshire in Durham. The conference theme is "Government Publishing (but not GPO): Issues, Resources, and Services." For more information contact Deborah Mongeau at URI's Government Publications Office at 401-792-2606.



The Public Relations Committee of the New England Library Association is in need of a member to serve as Rhode Island's representative. The Chair of the PR Committee is Arlene Bielfield. Anyone interested in this assignment can call Arlene at 203-267-6620 or Eileen Socha, RILA's NELA Councilor, at 434-2453.



The University of Rhode Island Library owns a 30-foot "Stack Mover" with all accessories. Inquiries about use of this equipment can be made by calling the library's administrative office at 792-2666.



The Redwood Library and Athenaeum recently received a \$10,000 grant from The Champlin Foundations to improve the 235 year-old library's management information system and begin automating other library functions.

CALENDAR

FEBRUARY 8, Young Adult Round Table, "Public Relations," North Kingstown Free Library, 9 a.m.

MARCH 5, RIEMA Annual Conference (see **BULLETIN BOARD**).

MARCH 11, Young Adult Round Table, "Reluctant Readers," Jesse Smith Memorial Library (Burrillville), 9 a.m.

MARCH 15, Government Publications Librarians of New England Annual Conference (see **BULLETIN BOARD**).

MARCH 16, Freedom of Information Day.

MARCH 22, Library Board of RI, West Warwick Public Library, 4-6 p.m.

APRIL 18-24, National Library Week.

APRIL 20, ALA Legislative Day, Washington, D.C.

APRIL 26, Library Board of RI, North Smithfield Public Library, 4-6 p.m.

PEOPLE

ERIK BRADFORD STOCKER, Librarian at the Redwood Library and Athenaeum, recently announced the appointment of **ROBERT BEHRA** as Curator of Special Collections. Mr. Behra previously was Director of the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin.

Brown University has appointed **SUSAN PETERSON** and **ELAINE SHINER** as Catalog Librarians assigned to catalog the 4,000 books, pamphlets, and serials in the H. Adrian Smith Collection of Conjuring and Magicana. The two-year project is being funded with a HEA Title II-C grant.

PAUL ARSENAULT has been appointed Coordinator of Technical Services of the Pawtucket Public Library. Paul was formerly Reference Librarian and also Technical Services Librarian.

**Rhode Island Library Association
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Compiled by Tanya Trinkaus Glass

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Tanya Trinkaus Glass was the Technical Services Librarian at the Coventry Public Library and is now a freelance artist.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

ANN MALO

Tattersall Drive
Lincoln, Rhode Island
Providence Public Library, Clerk

DONNA SHERMAN

Executive Director
Literacy Volunteers of Rhode Island
Providence, RI

RAYMOND TELLIER

Pascoag Public Library
Pascoag, RI
Director

RILA AWARDS:

Why They're Important, and Why We Should Give Them

During the past five years that I have been a part of RILA activities, I have come to appreciate and enjoy the process by which our organization recognizes members, lay and professional, who have made significant contributions to the library community.

RILA makes awards in two categories: one is the Trustee of the Year, the other(s) our Outstanding Librarian and/or Special Achievement Award. The first award is drawn from the trustees who serve on boards throughout the state, the second from our own professional ranks. They both share an indefatigable energy focused on making our libraries work better.

No one who has scrutinized the letters of recommendation for trustee can come away without feeling both awed and a little tired! The functions of a trustee may vary from library to library, personality to personality, but one senses from their director's commendations, that the libraries they serve are infinitely enhanced by their contributions, whether financial, legal, even physical (one Trustee of the Year shoveled snow, I believe!)

The awards made to professional librarians are new to the organization. Prompted by a suggestion at the annual Business Meeting in 1990, a committee was formed to define the awards. Those criteria appear below. Thus far, two awards have been made, one to Virginia Carter, specifying her vast contributions to the literary program in Rhode Island: the other to Jackie Cooper, exemplifying excellence in her service to the public at the Rochambeau Library, Providence.

It was my pleasure last June, as RILA President, to present these awards to Mr. Berry and to Jackie. I think that those of us who participated in that meeting remember the graceful eloquence of our award winners. Trite as it may be, there is something heartwarming about such an occasion. It shows our pride in what we do, and our recognition of what our colleagues do, in exemplary fashion, to make our library lives better, deeper, richer.

I urge you to reflect on those around you, and give serious thought to nominating any one of them for an award. Directors will receive a letter from the RILA President soliciting nominations. Qualifications for the Librarian awards appear below; a short letter illustrating the nominee's qualifications would be in order.

Every year I come to this time, and can think easily of two or three candidates for the Librarian's awards. Then time and my tasks take over, and I say "Next year." It is next year! And there are colleagues around us who do come to mind, without whom my

life and the lives of those around me would be infinitely the poorer.

Judith Paster
Past President, RILA

Outstanding Librarian Award

This award honors the career accomplishment of the librarian who has demonstrated an outstanding record of service to both his/her library and the library profession. The following will be given to those nominees who have achieved in more than one of these areas.

- Development of outstanding service in field(s) of expertise, e.g. children's, administrative, technical.
- Involvement in statewide library activities.
- Record of professional library leadership.
- Encouragement of community/institutional support for the library.

The nominee must be a member of the Rhode Island Library Association. The RILA Executive Board reserves the right not to present this award in any given year.

Special Achievement Award

This award honors the individual(s) who has achieved a significant project or instituted an innovative program during the year. The achievement being honored should:

- Have had a significant impact on the library, the community, or the library profession.
- Be timely, taking place within approximately the past year.

The RILA Executive Board reserves the right to present more than one award, or not to present this award in any given year. This award may be given to the same individual more than once.

Nomination Form

Attach a statement of nomination with a description of the nominee's contributions. When appropriate, illustrative materials may also be submitted with the nomination form. Send to Janet Levesque, RILA President, Cumberland Public Library, 1464 Diamond Hill Road, Cumberland, RI 02864, no later than April 30, 1993.

Award (check one) ☐ Outstanding Librarian
☐ Special Achievement

PERSON NOMINATED

LIBRARY

TELEPHONE

YOUR NAME

LIBRARY AFFILIATION

TELEPHONE

Rhode Island Library Association

Personal Membership Application and Renewal Form – January – December 1993

Please print or type

Name _____

Work Information: Position _____

Name of Library or Organization _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Home Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

Preferred mailing address: _____ Work _____ Home _____

Check here if there is a change from last year's directory information _____

Association Memberships:

ALA _____ NELA _____ RIEMA _____ COLA _____ Other (Please Specify) _____

RILA needs you!

Current RILA committees on which you serve:

1 _____ 2 _____

Please check area(s) of interest so we can call upon you for help on one of our committees.

Conference _____ Federal Relations _____ Membership _____ Personnel _____ Government Relations _____

Intellectual Freedom _____ Nominating _____ Public Relations _____ Publications _____ Trustee Affairs _____

*Mentor Program

____ Please check here if you are a new member and would be interested in our mentor program.

Please specify area of interest _____

____ Please check here if you are a renewing member and would like to be a contact person for a new member.

Dues Schedule (Check category that applies)

Student \$12 _____

Retired \$15 _____

Salaried Library Personnel:

Trustee \$15 _____

Affiliate \$15 _____

Under \$15,000 \$15 _____

\$15,000 – \$19,999 \$25 _____

\$20,000 – \$29,000 \$30 _____

\$30,000 and Above \$35 _____

Life Members No Charge

\$ _____ Dues Paid \$ _____ contribution to ALA Washington Office

\$ _____ Contribution to Right to Read Foundation

\$ _____ Total Enclosed

Make checks payable to RILA and mail by March 31, 1993 to:

Kathy Ellen Bullard, Woonsocket Harris Public Library, 303 Clinton Street, Woonsocket, RI 02895

*A note about the Mentor Program

The Mentor Program is in its second year in Rhode Island and is designed to help someone who is new to librarianship, new to Rhode Island or new to RILA (or new to all three!) get acquainted with the ins and outs, ups and downs of living and working in Rhode Island's libraries. The Membership Form provides a place to indicate an interest in receiving a mentor or serving as one.

EDITOR'S JOURNAL

At RILA's annual Fall business meeting, incoming President Janet Levesque said something that bears repeating: "No RILA president is any better or worse than the volunteers who are willing to participate with her."

This is not only true about presidents and their organizations - it is also true of their publications. Any success that the *RILA Bulletin* enjoys is in direct proportion to the willingness of busy librarians (like the three who contributed to this issue's focus topic on **The Internet**) to research, write and share their efforts with all of us.

Would YOU consider contributing to the *Bulletin*? On the theory that the more specific a request the easier it is to fill, let me offer a few suggestions.

- **Pro and Con** A side-by-side presentation of opposing viewpoints on specific issues. One sample topic might be "Charging overdue fines for children's books."
- **The Funnies** *Reader's Digest* does well with "Humor in Uniform." How about "Humor in Libraries?" Amusing (sometimes even hysterical) things do happen there. Let's hear about them. Anyone out there good with cartoons? How about some Rhode Island originals?
- **Viewpoint** Have a point of view? A complaint? Some applause? Something that concerns you? Write a guest editorial.
- **Profiles** Feature articles are always welcome, but smaller articles - about a special service, a new collection or procedure, success stories, exhibits, discoveries, or just a new idea - these are often what personalize and energize monthly publications.

There are many ways that you can contribute to the *Bulletin*. And the more contributions, the healthier and more interesting the *Bulletin* is.

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