

University of Rhode Island

DigitalCommons@URI

RILA Bulletin

Rhode Island Library Association

3-1994

Bulletin of the Rhode Island Library Association v. 67, no. 3-4

RILA

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

Recommended Citation

RILA, "Bulletin of the Rhode Island Library Association v. 67, no. 3-4" (1994). *RILA Bulletin*. Book 233.
https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/rila_bulletin/233https://digitalcommons.uri.edu/rila_bulletin/233

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. 67 N. 3 & 4

ISSN:0146-8685

March/April 1994

Challenges to Intellectual Freedom in Rhode Island

BY RACHEL H. CARPENTER

In May of 1993, the Rhode Island Library Association's Intellectual Freedom Committee (RILA/IFC) sent a survey to the directors of forty-seven public libraries in Rhode Island. The survey asked the directors to provide information regarding objections to library materials or challenges which they had received at their libraries in the previous five years. Of the forty-seven surveys sent by the RILA/IFC, nineteen were returned, representing about forty percent of the total. Ten libraries out of the nineteen reported no challenges documented. Nine libraries told of twenty-one challenges to library materials. Of the nine, one library had documented seven challenges; another documented six challenges; and a third library documented two challenges. The remaining six libraries had one challenge each.

Most of the challenges were handled successfully. Most often, conversation with the librarian on hand or the library director brought the challenge to a quick end. In a few cases, phone calls or correspondence from the library director resolved the matter. One library reported making the change(s) stressed in the challenge and another reported that the challenged materials "suspiciously" disappeared from the library's collection. We decided to include all of the challenge reports we received regardless of date, since a few were returned with no date noted and two had dates prior to the five-year period we requested.

In addition to information about specific challenges, we requested information regarding the awareness or notification of library or non-library organizations (such as the RILA/IFC or the American Civil Liberties Union) to assist with the challenges. We asked for copies of library policies or forms (if they differed from those found in the *RILA Intellectual Freedom Handbook*) which address censorship matters and are used when challenges occur. We also asked for input on how the RILA/IFC might be more helpful with resolving censorship matters. Regarding these last three points:

Twelve of the nineteen responding libraries have collection development policies, four do not, and three libraries did not answer.

Of the nine libraries which documented challenges, seven indicated that they did not seek any outside assistance from library or non-library groups. Two libraries did not answer.

Of the nine libraries which documented challenges, six indicated that they were aware that outside assistance was available in matters relating to censorship in libraries, one library was not aware, and two libraries did not answer.

Responses to the question of what the RILA/IFC can do to be more helpful included:

"Send a reminder to library board members discussing the importance of this issue to libraries."

"Keep its ears to the ground for incidents that occur and inform the library community."

"Assist libraries in making the public aware of the freedom to read and ... educate the public on the role of the public library in the community."

"By providing librarians with a list or updates of materials that are or have been challenged enabling us to be prepared. Also, to educate the public with Right to Know campaigns and Freedom to Read literature."

One librarian provided this observation: "I think the easiest way for people to censor is to steal the books or videos, or keep them overdue and say they've lost them."

In the cover letter to the library directors, we insured that "library or individuals' names will not be used in reporting the results of this survey." However, anyone interested in speaking to a library director regarding one of the reported challenges may contact Rachel Carpenter (James P. Adams Library, Rhode Island College) who will inform that director of your interest in a direct consultation.

Censorship Survey Results

BOOKS

Date of Challenge: 1993

Author: Blume, Judy

Title: *Forever*

Reason for challenge: "Adult subject matter". Mother was concerned about this kind of material being available for teens to borrow.

Action/Resolution: Librarian spoke with mother and agreed that the inside cover does state that *Forever* is Blume's first novel. Explained that the library's entire collection is available to all, either to use in-house or for check-out and that it is not library policy to deny access to materials. Librarian recommended the title be put in the adult section rather than in the YA section. Also informed the mother that the responsibility of her daughter's selections were hers. Also stated that if the mother has any further concerns she would be happy to discuss them.

Date of Challenge: 1993

Author: Dahl, Roald

Title: *Enormous Crocodile*

Reason for challenge: Too scary for children

Action/Resolution: Discussed library's policy with patron. Recorded comments.

Date of Challenge: 1993

Author: Everitt, Betsy

Title: *Mean Soup*

Reason for challenge: Patron felt that child might be encouraged to yell into a pot of hot water and be subsequently scalded. (Someone in the patron's family had been scalded by boiling water.)

Action/Resolution: Librarian and patron looked at the book together and found that the child is never out of his mother's reach. While the patron was still uncomfortable with the book the library felt that the book had great merit and did not want to withdraw it from the collection.

Date of Challenge: 1993

Author: Miller, Judi

Title: *How I Kept the US Out of War*

Reason for challenge: Uses the Lord's name in vain. ("Oh my God, a talking dog," a woman screamed.)

Action/Resolution: Librarian explained about library book reviewing practices. Challenger wanted books to be labeled. The librarian explained that libraries do not label books.

Date of Challenge: 1993

Author: Schwartz, Joel

Title: *Upchuck Summer*

Reason for challenge: Parent and 9 year old daughter were disturbed by passage in book on wet dream.

Action/Resolution: Librarian reread reviews of the book and wrote a letter to the patron in support of the work. Patron has not pursued the challenge further.

Date of Challenge: 1993

Author: Willhoite, Michael

Title: *Daddy's Roommate*

Reason for challenge: Issue of homosexuality – "forbidden by the Bible"

Action/Resolution: Several people became aware that the book was on order. Both the director and the president of the Friends group were contacted. Director discussed library book selection policy, Policy on Access by Minors, and Reconsideration of Materials procedure with callers. Library staff was also asked to review these policies. Director is planning to review same policies at next board of trustees meeting in anticipation of the furthering of this challenge.

Date of Challenge: 1992

Author: Shaw, Richard

Title: *The Kitten in the Pumpkin Patch*

Reason for challenge: An illustration shows a woman who may be physically abused by her husband. Patron questioned suitability for preschoolers since it was a picture book, but did not request that the book be removed.

Action/Resolution: Librarian responded that the illustration was subtle and did not necessarily depict physical abuse by another person.

Date of Challenge: October 1991

Author: cummings, e.e.

Title: *Hist Whist*

Reason for challenge: Patron complained on religious grounds, objecting to the "devil worship" in the book.

Action/Resolution: The director listened while the patron talked at length about her religious beliefs about devils/Satanism/magic/sorcery. Director responded that Halloween has become a secular holiday, and that magic is a common theme in folklore, unrelated to religious implications. Patron agreed to take the responsibility for selection of books for her children and praised the library. Patron had also complained to the children's librarian about selections of fairy tales that contained magic for story times. Children's librarian agreed to post titles of books to be used during story time, but not to eliminate the stories involving magic.

Date of Challenge: 1990

Author: Fox, Mem

Title: *Guess What?*

Reason for challenge: Patron complained that the pictures in this book, which is about a witch, are too explicit, including a picture of witch's underwear hanging on clothesline and of the witch in the bathtub.

Action/Resolution: Patron was told that the book was recommended in the reviewing journals on which the library bases its selections. Patron was told she could fill out a complaint form, but she declined.

Date of Challenge: 1988

Author: Peele, Richard

Title: *Remembering the Good Times*

Reason for challenge: Suicide, crime. Inappropriate for "young teens."

Action/Resolution: Director responded by letter (included copies of book reviews) noting that Richard Peele is a highly respected YA author who deals sensitively with difficult subjects.

Date of Challenge: 1988

Author: Rogers, Rosemary

Title: *The Wanton*

Reason for challenge: Patron complained in writing that it "was the most disgusting book I have ever tried to read." Explicit sex, sodomy, etc.

Action/Resolution: Director responded by letter to patron, explaining that R. Rogers is a very popular writer with a large following.

Date of Challenge: 1986

Author: Humphrey, Derrick

Title: *Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep*

Reason for challenge: Concern about teenage suicide rate. Patron was concerned about access to a "how to" book on suicide.

Action/Resolution: Director explained that the topic of suicide is in demand for school reports, general interest, etc. The patron was given an Objection to Inclusion form, but the patron did not return form.

Date of Challenge: 1977

Author: Ungerer, Toni

Title: *Beast of Monsieur Racine*

Reason for challenge: Macabre details in illustration - visual violence.

Action/Resolution: The book was removed from picture book section.

Date of Challenge: (year unknown)

Author: Dahl, Roald

Title: *Ah, Sweet Mysteries of Life: Stories*

Reason for challenge: Animal husbandry. Parent did not want 8 year old son to read it.

Action/Resolution: Book had been classified as juvenile literature. After reviewing it, the book was recataloged as adult fiction.

Date of Challenge: During school year (year unknown)

Author: can't recall

Title: can't recall

Reason for challenge: A JV book about witches in colonial U.S. and the types of activities they're alleged to have engaged in. Parent was surprised and appalled that a small town library would carry such graphic and disturbing information for children to read about. Parent did not want daughter to be exposed to such books.

Action/Resolution: Librarian met with the parent (after reading the book) to explain that the book in question

was the product of research by a reputable author; it was factual, not sensationalized; didn't deal with the horrible deeds of witches and was not intended to scare or titillate readers. Suggested to the parent that he/she, not the librarian, monitor the child's reading materials.

LIBRARY LOBBY DISPLAY

Date of Challenge: 1990

Subject: Models depicting monsters, and scenes from fantasy novels

Reason for challenge: Patron objected to werewolves scene ("Not suitable for children") and to model of a female form which was felt to be "grotesquely misproportioned" which the patron found to be sexist and degrading.

Action/Resolution: Director contacted the challenger by telephone, discussed the display and agreed to contact the organization responsible for the display to see if the group could substitute another model for the one the complainant found objectionable. This was done. The director feels the challenge was effectively resolved but does not think the challenger was satisfied with the outcome.

VIDEOS

Date of Challenge: 1993

Title: *Clockwork Orange*

Reason for challenge: Vulgar, dirty, and degrading to women.

Action/Resolution: Discussed library's policy with patron. Recorded comments.

Date of Challenge: 1992

Title: *My Life as a Dog*

Reason for challenge: Adult patron thought it was a "children's" video, was surprised and "horrified" by the nudity in the film.

Action/Resolution: Patron felt the video should be removed entirely or at least labeled "for adults" or "nudity." Other patrons were asked to be involved by this patron. The library board was informed and called upon to address the question. They felt the video box cover was "misleading" in that it showed only a drawing of a boy and a dog and provided no other rating or information which would help parents in the selection of this video for children. (The video was not originally shelved with other children's videos.) The library board agreed to have the video put in another box; however, the video disappeared from the shelf and has not been seen since. The librarian has noticed a recent rash of missing library materials.

Date of Challenge: 1990

Title: *Don't Eat the Pictures* (Sesame Street)

Reason for challenge: Patron wanted video removed from collection because it would be frightening to children. Also, the patron was unhappy about the mythology of the underworld he/she felt was presented.

Action/Resolution: Librarian obtained reviews of the video (all of which were very positive) and gave these to the director, who wrote a letter to the patron (enclosed reviews).

Date of Challenge: 1987

Title: *The Tin Drum*

Reason for challenge: Patron felt that video was vulgar, pornographic, and not fit for family viewing.

Action/Resolution: Director wrote a letter to the patron (enclosed reviews) and explained the library's policy of providing a broad variety of materials to suit many interests.

P.S.: For your information

Earlier in 1993 the RIEMA Intellectual Freedom Committee, then chaired by Susan Rosenzweig, sent out a survey to 322 school libraries. 98 out of 100 returned surveys were used. Twenty-one challenges were reported, nineteen for specific titles or items and two reports of general complaints. The titles challenged were:

Elementary school

The Stupids, by Harry Allard

Nikki 108, by Rose Blue

Abraham Lincoln, by Igrid & Edgar Parin d'Aulaire

The Old Witches Party, by Ida DeLage

Double Dare O'Toole, by Constance Greene

Alice in Rapture, Sort of, by Phyllis Naylor

Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark, by Alvin Schwartz

In the Night Kitchen, by Maurice Sendak (2 challenges)

A Light in the Attic, by Shel Silverstein

The Witches of Worms, by Zilpha Keatley Snyder

Middle/junior high school

"Dungeons and Dragons"

Medusa (Monsters of Mythology series), by Bernard Evslin

Are You in the House Alone, by Richard Peck

Rolling Stone (magazine)

High school

Rolling Stone

Mad (magazine)

For a copy of the report on the RIEMA survey, please contact the RIEMA/IFC Chair: Toni Grimley, Librarian, Rhodes Elementary School, Warwick, RI.

— ***Rachel Carpenter***

is Reference Librarian at James P. Adams Library, Rhode Island College, and past chair of the Intellectual Freedom Committee.

It's time to debunk the myth that when political groups or individuals carrying their banner, try to censor school [or library] materials, that they are representing America's parents.

*Arthur Kropp, President
People for the American Way, 1993*

A Librarian's Tour of China

BY BARBARA F. WEAVER

In November I visited China as a member of a delegation of American librarians traveling under the auspices of the People to People Citizen Ambassador Program. This program, started by President Dwight D. Eisenhower, sponsors cultural exchange visits to faraway countries by United States citizens. This year's China trip was the second such trip for library people, the first having been a trip to Russia last year.

Our group was quite large, consisting of some 65 or so librarians, led by Peggy Sullivan, Acting Executive Director of the American Library Association. Since the trip was billed as being for children's librarians, most of us were indeed either school librarians or children's specialists in public libraries, though there was a smattering of public library directors and even two of us representing state library agencies (the other person was a children's consultant from the Hawaii State Library).

Any of us who might have thought this was an easy way to get a tax-deductible vacation were quickly disabused of the thought. Our hosts crammed our days with visits to libraries and other cultural institutions. We visited the National Library of China in Beijing, the graduate library school at Beijing University, the Provincial Library in Nanjing, and several libraries catering to children, one a public library for children only, and one a demonstration school library attached to a teacher-preparation college. For me the most memorable occasion was our visit to the Rare Book Room at the National Library of China, where we were not only shown the room housing a many-thousand-volume history of China, written by hand in the 15th century, but were also given the opportunity to look at several individual volumes that our hosts set out for our view. This was a most unusual and gracious gesture on their part, and much appreciated by all of us.

Another very touching occasion was our visit to the children's library in Beijing, where we visited a group of middle-school children who were making collages based on stories they had read or made up. I was the fortunate recipient of one of the collages, which I now have hanging in my office. It appears to be the Chinese equivalent of the Chicken Little story (it's a squirrel who drops a nut from the top of a tree, causing a similar panic down below). A most appropriate decoration for the wall of anyone in state government these days!

It was most gratifying to see the importance that the Chinese attach to libraries and learning. Their National Library and their university libraries have magnificent collections, and are housed in impressive buildings. Their "public" (in schools and elsewhere) libraries have been impoverished for many years, and the Chinese are trying desperately to catch up. It appears to be difficult for them to find enough books to stock their libraries, as

well as having similar budgetary problems to those we encounter here. However, they insist that high quality libraries are a priority for them, and they certainly are making great efforts to see that this priority is accomplished.

Our greatest ordeal was an unexpected overnight stay at the Beijing Airport when it was closed for 36 hours because of heavy fog. Anyone who survived the ALA Midwinter snowstorm crisis at O'Hare Airport some years ago will understand our predicament. Media reports said that there were some 45,000 people stranded there (and this in an airport about the size of T. F. Green!). There were no chairs, so people sat on the floor or on their suitcases. I lay down on the floor for a while, but got up when I kept being nearly stepped on by Chinese gentlemen rushing to what they thought was an empty space!

A special treat was meeting Joan Reeves' daughter *Caroline in Nanjing*. *Caroline is doing graduate research at Nanjing University on the development of the international Red Cross in China. It was such fun to meet with her and share experiences.*

Our hosts were superb. They took care of our every need, including making sure that we got on the first available plane out of Beijing. We stayed in first-class American-style hotels, and were treated to excellent meals at wonderful restaurants. Two of us were vegetarians, and our guides made sure that the restaurant people everywhere we went knew that we didn't eat meat.

They were wonderful to me personally, too. I had to leave the tour group in Suzhou and make my way to Shanghai alone so that I could get back to the states in time for a meeting of the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies. The tour people not only escorted me to the train and bought my train ticket, but arranged for someone to meet me in Shanghai and take me to the airport. They also - just in case anything went wrong - gave me notes in both Chinese and English to give to porters and taxi drivers. Fortunately I didn't need the notes, but I certainly felt a lot more comfortable having them on hand.

And yes, we did get to see some tourist sights. We climbed the Great Wall, visited Sun Yat Sen's mausoleum and the Forbidden City, and sneaked off one afternoon to say hello to the pandas at the Beijing Zoo. That too was an adventure: it turned out that our taxi driver couldn't read the directions to our hotel, even though they were in Chinese. Fortunately, one of our group was very resourceful as well as observant. She sat in back of our driver, and motioned to him in the rear-view mirror whenever he should turn. We did eventually get back to the hotel, and I think the taxi driver was relieved, too.

My overall impressions as a first-time visitor? Many, many people, every one of them unfailingly polite and gracious; great quantities of bicycles, most of them with several family members riding together and many haul-

ing very heavy loads of bricks, furniture and other bulky items; incessant traffic in the cities; lots of smog; also lots of building construction and renovation, but practically no large machinery to help; a sense of energy and hope, and a much greater feeling of freedom and openness than I had expected. We of course saw only a tiny fragment of the country, but a most impressive fragment. Altogether a very worthwhile trip. I'll show you my pictures if you're really interested.

*- Barbara Weaver
is the Director of the Department of
State Library Services*

Rhode Island Library Association
1993 - 1994 Executive Board

President

Florence K. Doksansky
Brown University Library

Vice President

James T. Giles
Cranston Public Library

Secretary

Patience Bliss
Coventry Public Library

Treasurer

Madeleine B. Telveyan
Rhode Island Historical Society

Past-President

Janet A. Levesque
Cumberland Public Library

Member-at-Large

John Bucci
Cranston Public Library

Member-at-Large

Joan G. Schaefer
Barrington Public Library

NELA Councilor

Eileen Socha
East Providence Public Library

ALA Councilor

Frank Iacono
Department State Library Services

RHODE ISLAND LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

TO: ALL MEMBERS
FROM: RILA EXECUTIVE BOARD
RE:: ASSOCIATION SURVEY
DATE: March 1994

The RILA Executive Board is seeking information from the RILA membership and its non-member colleagues to assist in planning the Association's long range activities and direction. This survey is being sent to members; another survey is being distributed to non-members. We ask that you support RILA's strategic planning effort by filling out the survey yourself, and encouraging others to do the same. Many of the items that are listed in this questionnaire were raised at the Fall Business Meeting, but only approximately one quarter of the membership participated in that program. It is important that all should have an opportunity to help in shaping RILA's future. To that end, please be as specific as you can in your comments and suggestions. The next few years will be very exciting ones for the library profession, and we hope to be responsive to your needs for an active and progressive organization.

PLEASE RETURN THIS SURVEY TO FLORENCE K. DOKSANSKY, EITHER THROUGH THE DELIVERY SYSTEM "BRO" OR BY MAIL TO: BROWN UNIVERSITY BOX I, PROVIDENCE, RI 02912 BY APRIL 30, 1994.

Mission (current objective in the RILA Constitution):

"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 throughout Rhode Island."

1) Do you concur with this objective? Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

RILA's overall program includes:

- Activities for trustees (e.g. programs, workshops, education)
- Communications between all types of libraries (public, academic, special, etc)
- Conference (e.g. Spring Conference, Fall Business meeting, professional contact)
- Continuing education (e.g. workshops, speakers, conference programs)
- Intellectual freedom handbook and advocacy
- Lobbying for library legislation on state and national level
- Public Relations (e.g. CATV, National Library Week, Press Releases)
- Publications (e.g. RILA Bulletin, Membership Directory)
- Salary resolution (value of librarianship)

2) Are there additional functions that you would like to see the organization involved in? _____

3) Are there things that you would like to see have greater emphasis? _____

RILA has 11 committees which give support to our efforts as well as opportunities for professional activity. We hope that you will consider participating in one of them.

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| Budget and Finance | Conference |
| Federal Relations | Government Relations |
| Intellectual Freedom | Membership |
| Nominating | Personnel |
| Public Relations | Publications |
| Trustee Affairs | |

4) Are you aware of the activities of these committees? Yes ___ No ___

- 5) Are there comments that you would like to make on any of these committees? _____

- 6) What are the important things that RILA does for you? _____

- 7) What improvements would you like to see in these efforts? _____

PLANNING: What do you think RILA ought to be doing in this arena?

- 8) Strategic planning for the organization Yes ___ No ___
 Comments: _____

- 9) Define RILA's goals more clearly Yes ___ No ___
 Comments: _____

- 10) Renew membership drive Yes ___ No ___
 Comments: _____

- 11) Other Yes ___ No ___
 Comments: _____

PERSONNEL ISSUES: What should RILA's role be in the following?

- 12) Continuing education (in what areas)

- 13) Recruitment of librarians (diversity, salary and reward packages)

- 14) Role in professional development and compensation programs

- 15) Offer opportunities for professional contact

- 16) Encourage support for and active staff participation in RILA from library directors

ROLES: Should RILA play a role in the following:

- 17) Advocacy for librarians (image, value and role of librarians in future) Yes ___ No ___
 Comments: _____

18) Publicizing this role to general public Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

19) Taking a more proactive and not reactive role in the community Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

PROGRAMS: Should RILA:

20) Review conference and fall business meeting Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

21) Cooperate with COLA, RIEMA, Library Board of RI, ARISHL, and New England state organizations
Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

22) Review publications (what beyond current would be useful) Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

23) Sponsor social events (to bring new life and fun to the organization) Yes ___ No ___

Comments: _____

24) What do you think are the most pressing issues for RILA in the next 5 years? Rate each on scale 1-5 (5 being highest priority). Please comment on each or add others.

Budget (Low) 1 2 3 4 5 (High) _____

Education (Low) 1 2 3 4 5 (High) _____

Membership (Low) 1 2 3 4 5 (High) _____

Programs (Low) 1 2 3 4 5 (High) _____

Other (Low) 1 2 3 4 5 (High) _____

25) What do you see as current and future needs or that you would like to see continued or supported more? (Please be specific in what you would like RILA to do.) _____

Sneak Preview! *The RILA Spring Conference*

RILA Conference Committee members are close to completing work on the 1994 Spring Conference, to be held at Salve Regina University on June 9 and 10!

Thursday's line-up will offer interest and variety, with programs on legislative issues, censorship challenges (i.e. *Daddy's Roommate*), collections, top quality management, crime and security, children's services, meeting the needs of the underserved, and the President's Speaker.

Friday will be devoted to exploring the electronic information superhighway. A morning session will address key issues and the overall concept of the so-called "super-highway", while afternoon break-out sessions will be geared toward specific interests, such as "How to get 'hooked' on the Internet", a progress report on Ocean State Freenet, and possibly an Internet Forum for advanced users. There are also plans to have a couple of terminals capable of logging on to LORI, the Library of Rhode Island, available for attendees to use throughout the conference.

As to changes, overnight accommodations are not being offered this year as part of the conference, and the dinner portion of the conference will be replaced by a more informal reception, probably held Thursday after the programs. Contacts for area Bed & Breakfast establishments and suggestions for dining out will be provided for attendees to plan on their own. There will be a box lunch available as usual.

In an effort to make this conference fun, too, there will be a "Best in Rhode Island Libraries" contest. All libraries are eligible, and anyone can submit nominations for the Best of . . . in these categories:

1. Best Parking
2. Best View (Can you beat Salve's?)
3. Best Director's Office
4. Best Staff Lounge
5. Best Landscaping
6. Best Architectural Detail
7. Best Meeting Room/Auditorium/Concert Hall
8. Best Fringe Benefit or Perq
9. Best Library Logo
10. Best "Wildcard" (You fill in the blank here - What do you have that's the Best in a Rhode Island library?)

Please submit photographs and/or descriptions (as appropriate) of nominations to: Pat LaRose, Newport Public Library, 300 Spring St., Newport, RI 02840, Phone 847-8720, FAX 847-8720, ext. (put in a pause) 116. Deadline is May 5, 1994. There will be a display in the lobby area during the conference of winners and nominees.

The Conference Committee members are trying to plan a conference that will attract all of our diverse membership by focusing on key issues that affect the profession across the board. There should be something of interest to everyone. Please watch for more detailed information about the conference on LORI, the CLAN

message system, and in our forthcoming brochure. Hope to see many of you there.

Conference committee members are: Anne Marie Alsup, RISD Library; Catherine Mello Alves, Rhode Island State Library; Myra Blank, Adams Library, RIC; Bonnie Good Buzzell, Brown University Library; Carol Drought, Warwick Public Library; Mary Masse Harty, Barrington Public Library; Pat LaRose, Newport Public Library; Kathryn Ryan, Newport Public Library, Eileen Socha, East Providence Public Library; Brian Walsh, Pawtucket Public Library; and Karen McGrath, Chair, Cranston Public Library, Auburn Branch.

- *Pat LaRose, Conference Committee*

BULLETIN BOARD

The American Library Association is presenting "Achieving Breakthrough Service in Libraries," a national teleseminar on Thursday, May 12th from 1 to 5 p.m. This unique learning experience, presented by Harvard Business School Professors James L. Hesketh and W. Earl Sasser, Jr., will introduce state-of-the-art management ideas for achieving service excellence in all types of libraries and will reach over 10,000 librarians at over 350 sites across the U.S. and Canada. Using case studies from public, academic, school and special libraries, the program will demonstrate how superior customer service can create impressive gains in productivity and generate excellence that leads to better patronage and support. Local R.I. teleseminar sites are the Johnson and Wales University Harborside Academic Center, Bryant College, and the University of Rhode Island. The registration fee for the teleseminar is \$44.95 (Individual ALA member) and \$49.95 (Other). To register call 1-800-753-5117. A money-back guarantee is offered to anyone not completely satisfied with the teleseminar.

The RILA Public Relations Committee has received a grant of \$966.00 for a statewide poster campaign on the theme, "Libraries Change Lives." The grant is from the ADDD fund established by longtime library supporter and advocate Herman Rose for library promotional efforts. The Rhode Island Foundation administers the fund.

PR Committee Chair Fran Farrell-Bergeron says that graphic designer and Westerly Public Library staff member Loraine Byrne has designed an eye-catching poster that conveys the variety and liveliness of all that is available to Rhode Islanders at their libraries. Copies of the 11 x 17 full-color poster will be distributed to 138 public, academic, school, and special libraries by National Library Week, April 17-23. Other posters will be distributed to media outlets, social service agencies, and high traffic areas like supermarkets and malls.

Meanwhile, the Committee's cable television program "L-TV" is shown every Thursday at 7 p.m. on Statewide Inter-Connect A. The only exception to this is

when the program is pre-empted by coverage of the General Assembly. Topics featured on the show so far include RILA, the Library Board of Rhode Island, the role of the trustee in the public library, some favorite reference sources, and literacy services in libraries. Upcoming programs will focus on CLAN, COLA, children's services and the Summer Reading Program, RIEMA and school libraries. If you have a topic suggestion or a reaction to the show, call Fran (828-3750) or Beth Sousa (455-8090).

The American Library Association (ALA) will attempt for the first time ever to take a national "snapshot" of library customer satisfaction by asking libraries to participate in a national survey. "Customer service is the heart of our profession," said ALA President Hardy R. Franklin in announcing the survey. "Sometimes that means asking questions as well as answering them."

Libraries of all types are encouraged to distribute the eight-question survey for a minimum of 12 hours during National Library Week, April 18-24. "Libraries Change Lives" is the theme for the annual observance which celebrates the contributions of libraries and librarians.

Libraries are asked to report their survey results by May 15 to the ALA Public Information Office. All responses are confidential and will be used solely for the purpose of compiling a national picture of library customer satisfaction to be used for promoting library use and support.

A camera-ready survey, in a simple "check one" format, is available from the ALA Public Information Office, along with guidelines for administering the survey. (ALA Counselor Frank Iacono also has several camera-ready surveys. Contact him at DSLS at 277-2726.) Questions include: How easy is it to find what you need? How helpful is the library staff? How important is the library to you? Libraries are encouraged to customize the survey by adding their name or logo or asking additional questions. Estimated time for filling out the survey is about three minutes.

Franklin has chosen "Customer Service: The Heart of the Library" as the theme for his 1993-94 presidential year. A national teleconference, "Achieving Breakthrough Service in Libraries," is scheduled May 12.

For more information, contact: ALA Public Information Office, 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611. Telephone: 800-545-2433, ext. 5044/5041.

The RIC TIX BUY-A-BOOK raffle, initiated last October as part of a fundraising drive to raise money for the purchase of books and periodicals for the James P. Adams Library of Rhode Island College, brought in over \$30,000. When added to outright contributions to the library and gifts from the RIC Student Community Government and the RIC Alumni Association, the overall total realized by the library is nearly \$105,000. The raffle was established by President John Najarian to send a message to the public regarding the importance of funding for higher education and to bring in much needed

revenue for the library, whose budget suffered a more than 50% decrease between 1989 and 1992 because of state-mandated cuts in spending for higher education.

The American Library Association's (ALA) Office for Intellectual Freedom and the Freedom to Read Foundation have been designated by the Frank Zappa family as among the organizations to receive contributions made in his memory. The Foundation has established the "Frank Zappa Memorial Fund" to receive such contributions. Contributions may be sent to: ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom, 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611. Contributions to the Freedom to Read Foundation/Frank Zappa Memorial Fund should be sent to: Freedom to Read Foundation, Frank Zappa Memorial Fund, at the same address.

For more information, contact the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom. Telephone: 800-545-2433, ext. 4224.

A memorial resolution honoring Frank Zappa as a tireless defender of the First Amendment and intellectual freedom was passed by the ALA Council at the recent Midwinter Conference in Los Angeles.

From now through May 15, 1994, the Mair-Davis Duo, Roger Williams University's Artists-in-Residence, will present their second annual Community Concert Series. The series is funded by Roger Williams University as an outreach program of the School of Fine and Performing Arts. Performances are available free of charge to non-profit and arts groups throughout Rhode Island. There are still a few openings in the schedule for this season. If your group would be interested in presenting the Duo in concert during the spring semester, please contact The Artists-In-Residence Program at Roger Williams University at 254-3221, or call the Duo off-campus at 861-6825.

May 9-11, 1994. New Hampshire Library Association (NHLA) Spring Conference, Center of New Hampshire, 700 Elm Street, Manchester, NH 03101. Speakers include: Laurel Thatcher Ulrich on *The Making of the Midwife's Tale*; Sven Birkerts on *Reading in the Electronic Age*; and Betty Turock on *Creating a Financial Plan for Your Library*. Other programs being planned are on: whole language for literature, original programming, interlibrary loan, homeschooling and the public library, and others. Contact: Sue Palmatier, New Hampshire State Library, North Country Office, P.O. Box 68, Twin Mountain, NH 03595, 1-800-462-1726.

Planned Parenthood of Rhode Island is looking for a volunteer to organize its resource center materials into a library. All those interested, please contact Susan Closter-Godoy, Planned Parenthood of Rhode Island, 401-421-7820.

A New England Regional Conference on Family Literacy will be held at the Providence Public Library, 225 Washington Street, on Wednesday, April 13th from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The conference, hosted by the Providence Public Library's Literacy Department, will provide an opportunity for library staff, adult educators, Head Start and Even Start program providers from across New England to exchange ideas and share material from their own successful program models. The morning program will focus on funding sources and strategies for intergenerational literacy projects; establishing effective community collaborations; and creative ways in which libraries and library staff can initiate and/or support family projects within their communities and school systems. One program from each of the six New England states will be highlighted during the afternoon workshops.

All participants are encouraged to bring materials to share and display. The registration fee is \$25.00 and covers lunch. The deadline for registration is Friday, March 25. Anyone wishing to register anytime thereafter, the fee will be \$30.00. For more information, please call Rosanne Trissler, Literacy Program Coordinator for the Providence Public Library at 401-455-8041.

D A T E S

APRIL 15: Annual Gathering for the URI Graduate School of Library and Information studies, featuring Mary Kay Chelton speaking on "Where Have All the Stories Gone: the Tension Between Information and Entertainment in Libraries." University Club, 6 p.m. Call 792-2947 for reservations.

APRIL 17-23: National Library Week

APRIL 19: Twentieth Annual Library Legislative Day, Washington, DC

MAY 12: "Achieving Breakthrough Services in Libraries," a Nationwide Teleseminar sponsored by the American Library Association. (See Bulletin Board)

JUNE 23-30: ALA Annual conference, Miami Beach, FL

P E O P L E

MELODY LLOYD ALLEN has been promoted to Library Program Specialist III at the Department of State Library Services (DSLS). In her new position, Melody will continue to be responsible for the development and coordination of service to children and, additionally, will serve as a team leader for the DSLS Local Library Development team (LLD).

FRANCES FARRELL-BERGERON is the new Director of the Robert H. Champlin Memorial Library in West Warwick.

ANNE HIRD has been named Project Director for Library Power/Providence, the project designed to improve school libraries in Providence funded by a grant from the DeWitt-Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund.

CHRISTINE LAMAR recently was named Director of the Foster Public Library.

ROBIN MEDEIROS, Technical Services Librarian at East Providence Public Library, is one of 32 librarians who have been chosen to participate in the 1994 Snowbird Leadership Institute, to be held July 28-August 2 at the Snowbird Resort in Utah. The Institute is sponsored by Dynix

SUSAN MILLARD is now Project Coordinator and Preservation Specialist for the R.I. Newspaper Project based at the R.I. Historical Society.

JEAN NASH, who has worked at the Robert H. Champlin Library in West Warwick since 1972 and has been Director since 1975, has retired. On behalf of the entire Rhode Island library community, we salute Jean for a job well done and wish her an enjoyable and fulfilling retirement.

(continued from page 11)

Library Program; (d) support the Principles for the Development of the National Information Infrastructure, and (e) adopt as ALA's parliamentary authority, the *Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*. Yes, *Robert's Rules of Order* died a quick death right there in the City of Angels.

A few other points. . . President Hardy Franklin urged all to attend ALA's national teleseminar on "Achieving Breakthrough Service in Libraries" on May 12th from 1 to 5:00 p.m. As of this writing three sites in Rhode Island will be making the teleseminar available (Johnson and Wales, Bryant College, and URI). Presented by James L. Hesketh, Professor of Business Logistics at the Harvard Business School, the teleseminar promises to present a powerful new model for customer service, relevant to all types of libraries. There have been some grumbling as to the program's cost but President Franklin stressed that this is not a money-making venture for ALA and, more importantly, will be the most valuable and exciting learning experience ever offered by ALA to so many people. Check out the details about how you can see it and by all means go, if at all possible. [See Bulletin Board item #1.]

And then there is the business of ALA and "social issues." One particular chapter is seeking endorsement of its resolution calling for ALA to refocus its attention on library issues and not "local political and social issues." Personally, I view this pronouncement as a simplistic, reactionary statement running contrary to various ALA policies and principles. And, as far as the issue of conference sites and gay rights is concerned, a compromise has already been reached in light of Council's vote to have the Executive Board act on a case by case basis. But proponents of this resolution argue that ALA is making decisions without reference to the wishes or concerns of the membership. So what do you think, you ALA members out there? Us folks representing RILA need to know.

Fault Line Features: ALA Los Angeles

BY FRANK P. IACONO, ALA COUNCILOR

Strolling down Figueroa Street in 60-degree weather, I must say that I was quite content to be in the land of quakes and away from the land of flakes (at least of the snow variety). Apparently, most everyone else felt the same way since this Midwinter Conference (February 4-10) drew a total of almost 11,000 – a figure that exceeded attendance at the previous two Midwinter sites, Denver and San Antonio. And conference site selection is where we begin our report, since it was high on the list of agenda items placed before Council.

When the ALA Executive Board voted to drop Cincinnati as the site of Midwinter 1995 because of the overturn of gay rights legislation there, it did so in accordance with ALA Council's January 1993 resolution stating that "ALA will enter into conference-site contracts only with organizations and legal bodies in cities, counties, or states that do not by law discriminate against lesbian, gay, and bisexual people." Concern by the Executive Board that ALA's commitment to equal rights for all members can come into conflict with its financial and programmatic responsibilities to the membership, the Board felt it was mandatory that Council examine the question anew. Here it must be noted that it will cost ALA money to cancel out on Cincinnati, though nowhere near the rumored \$400,000 that was bandied about in various circles. When all was said and done, the 1993 resolution was reaffirmed and Council voted to allow the Executive Board to handle each case individually, based on criteria such as alternate site availability, amount of penalties, how close to a scheduled conference cities enact discriminatory laws and/or ordinances, etc.

As far as Midwinter 1995 is concerned, Cincinnati's loss will be Philadelphia's gain. Philadelphia was chosen over Washington, DC in light of its strong proposal to ALA, which represents a \$55,000 savings from what was to be budgeted for Cincinnati. The city is anxious to show off its new "state-of-the-art" Convention Center and will be providing a "Welcome Program" for ALA conference-goers at no cost. So look for those free soft pretzels upon arrival.

The other major topic of interest to Council and attendees in general was ALA's self-study. The Self-Study Committee held hearings at various times during the conference and was particularly interested in reactions to the report it commissioned, namely the *Structure and Governance Audit of the American Library Association*, more commonly known as the Perlov report, in deference to Dadie Perlov, President of the Consensus Management Group (CMG), which prepared it. This is a clear, concise, and fascinating study of ALA, how it works and how it should work. Its recommendations, calling for some structural change but, more importantly, critical change in organizational culture, and its emphasis on the importance of having an organization that is program driven rather than budget driven, were very well received. (Call me if you would like a copy.) The Self-Study Committee also promised a draft final report with recommendations prior to the Annual Conference in Miami.

Other Council business included passing resolutions that: (a) urge Congress to reject the LSCA and HEA cuts proposed by the President; (b) call for adequate funding for the GPO and the Library of Congress; (c) chart a future course for the Federal Depository

(continued on page 11)

The RILA BULLETIN is published six times per year by the Rhode Island Library Association. Managing Editor: Mattie Gustafson, Newport Public Library, Box 8, Newport, RI 02840 (847-8720), Feature Editors: Norman Desmarais, Providence College, Phillips Memorial Library, Providence, RI 02918 (865-2241) and Wendy Knickerbocker, Rhode Island College, Providence, RI 02908 (456-9605); News Editor: Frank Iacono, DSLS, 300 Richmond Street, Providence, RI 02903-4222 (277-2726); Editor & Writer: Judith Paster, 52 Seaview Avenue, Cranston, RI 02905 (467-8898); Subscriptions Manager: John Fobert, Rhode Island College, Providence, RI 02908 (456-9614). A current list of RILA Executive Board Members and Committee Chairs is available in Volume 67, No. 1 & 2. Subscriptions: free to members; \$15/year in U.S.; \$20/year foreign. Deadlines: 1st of the month for features and 5th 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, Myra Blank, Rhode Island College, Peepetoad Road, Warwick, RI 02888, RIC/Adams Library (456-8190). Subscription correspondence: contact Subscriptions Manager. For further information, contact the appropriate Editor. Technical Production: Verbatim, Inc., 769B Hope Street, Providence, RI 02906 (273-6930). 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

00387 M

WAR

RITA H. WARNOCK
271 DOYLE AVENUE
PROVIDENCE, RI

02906