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# Rhode Island Library Association Bulletin

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## *A Conversation with James Giles*

BY JUDITH PASTER

*This conversation with Jim Giles, former Director of the Cranston Public Library, occurred on Monday afternoon, April 17, several weeks after his retirement from the Library. We spoke in the Program Room of the William Hall Library. Jim appeared appropriately dressed for a "retiree" in an open shirt and cardigan, a copy of **American Libraries** under his arm.*

**JP:** You will not remember me, but I remember my first meeting with you in 1978 or so. I had come to Cranston to be interviewed for a small job at one of the branches, Arlington, perhaps. The interview was held in what was at the time, your office, which is now where the Children's Room is, just over our heads. There I faced John Fox Cory, John Bucci, and yourself, all three lined up!

**JG:** Extraordinary.

**JP:** I certainly would not have thought that I would see any of you again, or know any of you, or foresee that I would end up living a mile or so away, and that this would be my library. What's that saying: "What goes around, comes around." I don't think that is anywhere more true than in Rhode Island. You never know in this state when someone will reappear from the past!

**JG:** And you never know who's related to whom! Doesn't it make you wonder why we're not all one library system sometimes?

**JP:** That is exactly one of the questions I had for you! One of the things you've accomplished in your career, and you've accomplished many things, is the consolidation of

the smaller libraries, such as the Arlington branch and this one, into one whole. That cannot have been an easy task, and I'd like to know about it.

Before that, can you give us some information about your own life and career? Are you a Rhode Islander? Or did you chose to come here?

**JG:** I grew up in Lowell, Massachusetts. I moved to Boston where I attended the Simmons College Library School from 1958 to 1960. I left Boston in 1960 to work for the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County. I worked there as an Art and Music Reference Librarian first. The second year I worked in Science and Industry, very different experiences, going from one end of the spectrum of knowledge to the other. After a couple of years in the main library, I applied for a branch librarian's position in the Sharonville Branch in the rapidly growing northern part of Hamilton county.

After a year in Sharonville, I moved to one of the system's older branches in Avondale, an inner city section of Cincinnati. The neighborhood was changing and presented the challenges, opportunities, and prob-



*Representative Jack Reed, Jim Giles and others at the groundbreaking for the addition to Cranston's Central Library*



lems typical of an inner city. I spent four years in Cincinnati.

Succeeding me at Sharonville, was Sondra Henderson, who became my fiancée. Sandy was raised in Cincinnati and worked for the Public Library from the time she was a page at age fourteen through library school at the University of Indiana and at the beginning of her professional career.

In 1964, after our marriage and the birth of our first son John, we moved to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, where I served as the second Allegheny Regional Branch Librarian of the Carnegie Public Library.

During our four years in Pittsburgh, our second son, David, was born. We arrived here in Rhode Island, where I became the first librarian for the Cranston Public Library. We have lived here for twenty-six years.

**JP:** Did you start out here at the Hall Library?

**JG:** When I came to Cranston, there were only two branches of the Cranston Public Library system: the Auburn and Oaklawn branches. The Arlington, Knightsville and Thornton Public Libraries were thinking of joining at the time. By the end of '69, they did join the system. All five, formerly independent libraries, turned their assets over to the Cranston Public Library, and if they had a building, they deeded it to the city of Cranston. The William Hall Library became a branch of the Cranston Public Library in 1971 through an agreement that gave the Cranston Public Library control of the Library's operations, but preserved the Hall Library's ownership of the building, management of the Hall Trust Funds, and care of the grounds.

**JP:** The Thornton branch doesn't sound familiar to me.

**JG:** It was a storefront library on Plainfield Street and the smallest of the branches. When funds became too tight to operate the branch, we started book van service that stopped in Thornton but also served other areas in northwestern Cranston.

**JP:** So, prior to centralization, libraries were neighborhood libraries? Probably very small, and dependent financially on the neighborhoods they served?

**JG:** From 1965 through 1971, in accordance with state law, multiple libraries within a municipality, shared state aid based on the service they were giving. There was a Library Council composed of trustees and librarians from the libraries that decided how to divide up grant-in-aid that was given to the City, approximately \$16,000.

Prior to the establishment of the Cranston Public Library, the City's total support for the private libraries was about the same as the state's grant-in-aid. From the city and town, there were ten thousand, five thou-

sand, four, two thousand, that was the kind of support the City was giving them. Totally, it wasn't much different than the state was giving them.

When the City assumed responsibility for the libraries, the support increased so that the first year, when they were operating libraries in 1967-68, it was \$100,000 approximately. So they did take some steps to support libraries.

The library system was formed out of the circumstances that came about because the Auburn Library wanted to build a new library, and there was some state money available. The state was interested in getting the libraries together on a municipal level. At the same time, the City government was interested in having some accountability for the monies spent on libraries.

Mayor Jim DiPrete had the Council commission a feasibility study, which was accomplished by Ken Shaffer, Dean of the Simmons College Library School. He recommended a development program for the Cranston Public Library, and that plan was pretty much implemented by the trustees and myself.

**JP:** Practically, how do you go about merging libraries together which had a separate identity before? Did you have meetings? Each of the small libraries must have had a librarian of some sort? Somebody in charge? Some had buildings, like this one, but maybe not all.

**JG:** There were both owned and rented buildings. The Auburn Library was moving from its own building into a rented facility when I arrived. It had moved from a house that it owned as a library on Park Avenue to the Wolfe Building which had been used as a furniture store next to the Citizen's Bank on Rolfe Street across from what used to be the post office. Auburn was in rented space until the new library was built on Pontiac Avenue in 1990-91.

I mentioned earlier that there was a Library Council that got together and decided how the funds would be divided up. They would meet and discuss common problems and try to come up with common policies in the city, to make library use more accessible.

So people already knew each other, and there was a precedent to getting together. Once we had the Cranston Public Library system and a library director in town, the librarians were encouraged to attend meetings of the Cranston Public Library whether they were a part of the system yet or not. We involved the people. By that time some of the ways that we could work together meant savings for them: to have one periodicals vendor, to combine our book purchases so we could get discounts, rather than each of us dealing with book salesmen by ourselves.

Once the library system was in place, in order to receive the state grant, standards had to be met, and



library policies, such as selection or personnel, had to be approved by the Board of Trustees and filed with the Department of State Library Services.

**JP:** So you were really building, from the ground up. The libraries were there, but had to be structured with basic building blocks.

**JG:** I worked with people that were here, people who probably had not had a lot of outside advice. The process was painful, I'm sure. Collections had not been weeded. When your state aid depended on how many books you had, you just didn't weed any out, and the gifts you got, went on the shelves. The idea of weeding the collection was a little strange for the libraries. But good public library practice dictates that when you put something on the shelf, it should be something people are interested in and take out, so that space is being used productively.



*Jim Giles at a COLA reception.*

It would be misleading to say that a person can come in and wave a magic wand and bring people together and bring libraries together. There was a spirit here, as I say, a predisposition for unity, for good library service. There was a very strong sense on the part of the trustees who were governing the library at the time, that we needed to improve library service; we needed to hire people who knew how to run libraries, people with experience. There was a readiness on the part of the trustees to see library service develop.

**JP:** Did you ever feel like an outsider in these years? Now, you're such a part of our lives, you're indigenous, or you seem that way. But in the beginning, you weren't. It took me a while, to feel at home in Rhode Island. Yet one day, when I came home from Boston or somewhere, I realized that this was my home. And this is where I feel at ease, which after all, is what you're supposed to feel at home. It didn't happen overnight!

**JG:** If that feeling were there, it wasn't a dominating sense or feeling. There were enough people who

made us feel welcome and provided the opportunities for personal growth. Also within the profession, there was a welcoming attitude. I'll never forget the tremendous support I received from Chuck Taylor, of the PPL, one of the tremendous gentle people in the field. I would visit Providence to look at the books on a weekly basis, the new books that had been ordered and arrived and were ready for processing. It was a great place to discover what the books were about, and Chuck made me feel that I could just as well be working at PPL, he was so welcoming.

Similarly at the Department of State Library Services, Elizabeth Myer and Jewel Drickamer, opened their arms and welcomed us to the state. Professionally, it was great. And in our community, the trustees and I became very good friends.

**JP:** I guess everybody knows now, what a singer you are. You have a wonderful voice that you used at NELA several years ago. You must also sing in a church choir.

**JG:** The church choir hasn't actually been something I've been able to do. As you know, church choirs require some rehearsal. Part of the responsibilities of a library director is availability to the community that you're serving. Once I tried singing in a choir in town, and it didn't work. Another time I joined a group in Providence, which got together only on Sundays, which was fine. I could handle that. When the choir required evenings, I wasn't able to do it. In church, my singing over the past ten years or so has been cantoring, or song leading, leading the congregation in parts of the service. I've had an interest in studying voice more. I've worked up a few programs and was able to do those for one of the library clubs. The Auburn Library Club is one of those tremendous support groups that, well, when you ask about what it was like when we came here, this group and others made me feel very much at home.

The first office that I had was in the basement of the Auburn branch. The Auburn Library Club would get together once a month. This was a group of women whose beginnings grew out of the nineteen thirties. They formed as a group to finance a new Auburn Library. They helped furnish the house that was purchased on Park Avenue. That group would meet once a month, and I couldn't help but be a participant in their activities, as my office was in the same area as the program room. The only thing that separated us was some magazine stacks!

**JP:** So you graced the meetings with a few numbers!

**JG:** Actually it was many years later. I had studied voice in college. As a music education major, I was required to present a song recital. My next song recital, twenty-five years later, was for the Leisure Learning Group in



Cranston. The group met for many years and then faded out as the leadership aged. When the Leisure Learners closed down, they gave the money left in their treasury to the Cranston Public Library. But the next time I performed, I gave a song program to the Auburn Library Club, and I've given programs for the past five years.

**JP:** Do you still give programs?

**JG:** Yes. They've become less formal programs and more fun things to do, almost to the point of sing-a-longs.

**JP:** I think it's a wonderful gift, to be able to make people relaxed enough to follow along and sing. It's a wonderful skill, it really is.

**JG:** I've got to tell you Karen McGrath [current librarian at Auburn] was able to put it together for me. We asked the folks who were in the club to let us know what their favorite songs were, and then, I tried to sing their favorites for them.

**JP:** Do you sing *a capella*?

**JG:** Yes, I've sung the last two programs *a capella*. Prior to those programs, I worked with very fine accompanists. The last couple of years, I didn't even have time to get together with the accompanist! The Auburn Club was gracious and supportive. The members were thrilled to have me come in and sing *a capella*. Last March, if it hadn't been for Karen, some of the songs wouldn't have gone anywhere, but she knew the tunes a lot better than I did. So we sang along together.

**JP:** I used to work with Karen, too!

**JG:** That's great! The PPL staff are such super people. You know, many people who have trained at the PPL, have come to work for the Cranston Public Library.

In the beginning, there simply were not many professional librarians in public libraries in the state and most of them were in Providence.

**JP:** That growing professionalism can now be seen in other library systems. Here in Cranston, there must be one professional in every branch.

**JG:** It isn't quite that, but the professional guidance is there. The job of the library director has become less "hands on" than it was at the beginning. I was very much involved in the selection of the materials; now Lynda Ross, Head of Adult Services, coordinates the purchasing of adult books. Angel Parr, Head of Children's Services, does that for children's books. Linda Archetto, Head of Young Adult and Audio-Visual Services, handles YA and AV materials.

**JP:** Defining who is, or is not, a professional librarian, still seems to me to be a thorny issue.

**JG:** It was hard for me not to think of Isabel Wallace, the former Auburn Branch Librarian, as someone

other than a professional. She had been in the library field for years and knew it very well, but did not have the benefit of going to library school. I always thought of her as a colleague.

Louise Lawrence, who as a trustee had helped to start the Marian Mohr Library in Johnson and who, late in life, got her Masters' degree in Library Science from URI, was the Oak Lawn Branch Librarian. Also at Oak Lawn was Leslie Peltier, who later became Children's Librarian at Hall. Leslie worked part-time presenting story hours on Saturday mornings.

That was the professional staff. Isabel and I were the only full-time people. Cranston now has thirteen professional positions.

In the early days of the system, we had no reference service. Reference service started at the William Hall Library in 1971. The first reference librarian was hired through a federal program. After the federal funds dried up, the City, appreciating the value of the reference service, continued to fund the position.

That grant made a great difference, because we were able to improve interlibrary loan service to Cranston libraries. The Hall Library served as the reference center for the library system until the move to the Central Library in 1983. The Hall Library also provided space for administration and technical services. And this Program Room, where we're sitting, was where the collection for the Central Library was organized under the supervision of the late William Bergeron, the Library's first Technical Services Librarian.

**JP:** Would you say based on your thirty-five years in libraries, that there's a tendency to unify libraries in the state of Rhode Island? Indeed, might it not be the biggest change you've seen? After all, you pulled Cranston together in one whole. I myself am amazed at how well CLAN works, for example.

**JG:** It's happening. I think the feeling of oneness is coming about with CLAN. We have come to depend on each other. I know the Hall Library, on a regular monthly basis, supplies as many books to other libraries as it borrows from other libraries in the state. In other words, sometimes it's a net lender one month, and the next month a net borrower. It's the only library in Cranston that has that kind of balance.

**JP:** I must say to you that I more often find things I'm looking for here than I do at Sockanosset. I don't know why that is.

**JG:** It's true of other library patrons in the state. There's a collection of forty-five thousand books here. John Bucci has developed a collection that's used.

**JP:** He's very good with those of us who come in to use the library. Even with me. He seems to have a grasp of



what I check out, and he's very quick to say, "Have you tried this?" It's not just me he does this with. I observe him interacting with other patrons all the time.

**JG:** It's not unusual for the central library in a month to receive two thousand books from another source. The book I'm reading now in a book discussion group, *Death Qualified*, came from East Providence. The Cranston copies were in use. The next library with a copy was East Providence. I reserved the book myself on a terminal and received the book, no charge, within a few days. It really is terrific.

**JP:** Changing the subject somewhat, I was astonished to learn that you had agreed to serve as RILA president again. I hope you're not setting a precedent! Do you have any thoughts on that?

**JG:** Quite simply, I thought of those who had given so much of themselves to the profession and concluded that, after twenty years, it was time to do it again.

**JP:** Can you see any differences between this term and the previous one? When was your previous term?

**JG:** It was 1974-75, but it was actually an 18-month term. The previous president, Paul Bazin, Assistant Director at Providence College, had an opportunity, midway through his term, to work on a doctorate. Paul also was a trustee of the Cranston Public Library. Paul knew that if he were to get his doctorate and keep his job, he needed to find some time. He resigned the presidency and the trusteeship. I moved up.

I can't really remember the challenges of those years. Certainly the problems of funding have been constant. I think our direction now, is one of promoting and providing greater services for the people who work in libraries. There's a need for a conscious "re-tooling", of providing continuing education for professional and support staffs, and to encourage those who are going to library school to participate in professional experiences. Not only should we as professionals be reading the *Bulletin*, but writing for it. We should be sharing our expertise through our electronic bulletin boards. We should participate in continuing education, either as instructor or student.

Some of the issues of 1974-75 may have changed, but others are still there, such as intellectual freedom, and new challenges with the media. We now have a major governance challenge with the Department of State Library Services, which was never questioned in 1974-75. The current governor is interested in seeing DSLS placed in the Department of Education where many of us think it will disappear.

**JP:** I do, too.

**JG:** That's a big question. The other issue that RILA focused its advocacy efforts on this year and joined

other library organizations in the state in doing so, was to implement the Lederberg legislation. The Lederberg legislation, which was passed in 1989, would increase state funding for libraries by 25% of the local appropriations by the year 2000. In actuality, the funding for libraries has decreased since 1989 from six percent of local appropriations to two percent, so we've got a long way to go in getting the sort of state support we need. But, we can't lose hope. We must keep working for it.

**JP:** It intrigues me to find people changing directions somewhere along the way in life. You have done that, and yet you are a young man, Jim. I don't think you are *someone who will go and grow roses! Or maybe you will!* Do you perceive yourself as ready for a change?

**JG:** I think definitely that I had a feeling of coming to the close of one experience and of wanting to do something else. That something else falls into broad categories. One is my interest in library buildings' being effective facilities for the library user, of being friendly for the library user, being functional and economic. I've been impressed with the money spent on some libraries, and yet the libraries don't convey a feeling of friendliness, or don't suggest that the user and the staff were given consideration when that building was constructed. To make some contribution to improving library buildings is an interest of mine, even writing in that area. I thought I'd begin with the research and the writing that involves.

I have been asked, however, if I would be interested in consulting in Coventry, so I applied and was selected as their library consultant. So I'm currently working on a building program with Deborah Barchi and her staff at the Coventry Public Library.

The other avenue that attracts me is advocacy. I am more interested in being an advocate right now than a practitioner in libraries. I am impressed by people who have become advocates over the years.

**JP:** You had been, as a librarian and a library figure, quite an advocate within your professional life. Do you think you might get more done, or have more energy for it, maybe be more creative in your thinking, outside the profession?

**JG:** It's an interesting thought. You certainly aren't burdened with a lot of other aspects of library administration. I think you're correct when you say that a library director has to be a strong advocate along with his trustees. The professionals can interact with the trustees. Professionals can give the answers to what questions come up, and lay persons can go out, and ask the political powers that be for funds.

I think that there's some advantage to having the library expertise to know, by training and by profession,



the reasons why we need funds for libraries, when talking with legislators. It's very difficult for library directors to abandon the shop for a couple of days to spend at the legislature. Sometimes that's necessary. So now, serving as I am, as RILA's lobbyist, I can devote my time as needed for that purpose. I'm glad to do that.

**JP:** You must be an answer to a prayer. Even in my days as RILA president and before, lobbying provoked big discussions. When one would say, "We need a lobbyist." Someone else would say, "We had a lobbyist x number of years ago, and he was terrible." That experience tainted the whole idea of a lobbyist ever since.

**JG:** There is a concern in the Association even today, and you can appreciate this as a past president, the general guidance I've been given in talking with people nationally about the question of "how do you work with a lobbyist?" is that you really need to know what the legislative goals of the Association are. You've got to know that. You've got to know that we're on record for the 1989 funding. So, every opportunity that we have, we ask for that funding, and support legislation that achieves that goal.

On the issue of the future of DSLS, the Executive Board has taken the position that it become the Library of Rhode Island, and move under the auspices of the Joint Committee of Legislative Services of the General Assembly.

This idea to work with other library organizations on areas of mutual concern came out of RILA's Strategic Planning sessions, which Florence Doksansky has done so much to coordinate. We think that that is the best way to preserve the Department's services today. The Executive Board's position regarding the placement of DSLS is in concert with the consensus that was reached at two state-wide meetings with legislators, members of the Department, librarians and library advocates.

**JP:** What is the Advocacy Task Force? It's new, isn't it?

**JG:** The Library Advocacy Task Force also came out of the retreat of the Executive Board last year. Every library organization was asked to list what its goals were, and to rank them by importance. The top two that emerged were advocacy and funding. The Library Board of RI set up two committees, one on advocacy, the other on funding. I was a member of the advocacy group. Our committee coordinated one of the most successful Legislative Days we've ever had. We chose the day of COLA's Annual Meeting as the day when all the organizations could participate. RILA started the year by distributing pocket calendars to the legislators. We've been meeting on a regular basis.

The Task Force has a representative from each library organization. We're scheduled to meet tomorrow afternoon. We've held many meetings because of

the high level of activity. The Task Force thought it would be a great idea if the library directors, and others, would interview legislators this year. With the help of DSLS, and wonderful work by Gayle Eaton, we had a survey taken and compiled. Ninety-nine legislators were interviewed by librarians. It was an eye-opener for many of us to sit down and talk to legislators. It went very well.

**JP:** Did you meet all in one place, or did each meet his or her legislator in his or her office?

**JG:** We tried to meet in a neutral setting. It was convenient at times to meet in a library. Some librarians went to the State House so they could see their legislators on one or two days. In my experience, each interview took at least a half hour.

**JP:** That works better, doesn't it? I remember two or three years ago, the Government Relations committee put together notebooks, and people were supposed to sign up for one of the legislators and contact him or her on a regular basis. I don't know how that went.

**JG:** This works better, since it's a lot easier to go back to the legislator, having established a relationship, and having an idea of who they are. The networking concept is something we need to develop and nurture. It takes nurturing. Also, legislators change. Since 1990, there has been a 60 percent change in legislators.

**JP:** This could be good since you have new people to work with.

**JG:** You're getting them right from the beginning. They haven't been hardened in a way.

**JP:** As someone who was an advocate in his professional capacity, do you feel more effective outside? I think that if you do, it may be a function of time, and, believe it or not, we do have limited energies. We prioritize our commitments, and every time we say "yes" to one thing, we may be saying "no" to something else.

**JG:** I think there's an adjustment. Like yourself, I don't think one stops being a librarian when you walk out the door.

**JP:** There's a commitment maybe, a devotion?

**JG:** When I came over today, *American Libraries* had just arrived, and I took it with me, thinking I might get a chance to read it, which is what I would have done before.

It's interesting, being outside. Not to be burdened by the day-to-day things. The administrators and the branch librarians as well, don't know what the next crisis will be. You know, as a reference librarian, you serve everybody, and you don't know where the next question is coming from.

**JP:** While I was still at Simmons, I did some volunteer work up in Pawtucket, and later, I was hired there. I



can still remember those early days when the other reference librarians were showing me what to do, and I was observing and every now and then I would handle a question. I was petrified of the phone. Because quite honestly in reference, when a phone rings, you do not know who is on the other end. You do not know kind of a situation you may encounter. Then, one day, you simply accept it. One day I could feel the change in me. I no longer cringed! My supervisor noticed it. She said, "Do you know what's happened?" "Yes!" I replied. Demanding, really demanding. And it does take its toll over time.

**JG:** You wind up giving so much help and satisfaction to people. By and large, you help people, and that's fantastic. That helps to overcome the downside, when you see the benefit that a phone call to the library makes to people.

**JP:** In thinking about the Advocacy Task Force, COLA, and the RILA membership, I'm a little concerned about laypeople and their place in library concerns and activities. In reading RILA's strategic planning proposals, it seemed to me that the RILA's proposed membership statement focuses on the professional and support staffs of libraries, and phases out trustees or other interested lay persons. Trustees are left to organize on their own. Is this true?

**JG:** The Strategic Plan encourages trustees to serve on other RILA committees, rather than having a committee of their own. In the planning process, the Association identified its primary audiences: professional librarians, paraprofessionals/support staff, library school students, and other information providers. The trustees were recognized as a secondary audience whose needs would be met primarily by other organizations. The DSLS accepts responsibility for trustee training and has published this year a handbook to meet that objective. RILA, for its part, needs to offer continuing education for library directors in trustee relations.

Another part of our mission is the promoting the importance of libraries to society. Keeping that priority in mind, the RILA board invested in a new set for the Public Relations Committee's Library-TV program. The old set was heavy, burdensome, and unattractive. The Board voted to use \$3200 from the Association's account to purchase the new set.

**JP:** There has been over the years, a discussion within RILA about how to use the \$15,000 in the savings account. The more enterprising advocated using it for just such projects as this; others wanted to keep it for a rainy day. This seems to me to be a good sign, that we see a worthy program and are willing to pay what is needed to keep it alive.

**JG:** Another concern is keeping LTV ongoing. The program requires an enormous amount of creativity

and energy. Frances Farrell-Bergeron, Public Relations Committee Chair, who has been the producer and host of LTV, has recruited new crew members this year.

**JP:** Do you see a trend now in which library organizations are realigning themselves? We've been talking about the degree to which lay persons should be involved within RILA or COLA.

**JG:** I think we've done a lot about that this year. I think we've coordinated things well, and complemented each other well. I think each organization is doing better at knowing its role and pursuing it accordingly. The notice from COLA that you and I received today, urges us to contact our representatives and senators on a state-wide issue, House Bill 6907, which transfers DSLS to the General Assembly as the Library of Rhode Island. This is the role that COLA can do well, making public what the issues are and informing us as to what action we can take.

**JP:** Where does the Library Board fit into this plan for relocating DSLS under the General Assembly?

**JG:** The Board remains intact. There are a few differences. First, in the new legislation the Library Board members would be selected by the Joint Committee on Library Services. The same people who are on the Board now would stay until January, 1996. A second difference is that the Board would elect the Chair from among its public members. Now, the Chair is appointed by the Governor. Representation on the Board from various constituencies would remain the same. A third difference is that the bill also adds representation to the Board from the Governor's office. The House and Senate have had and would continue to have representation.

One benefit of this legislation is that members of the Assembly are close to the people. Libraries are the people's universities. They and DSLS have not fared well under the Governor in recent years. The Governor's office cut local library funding in half in January of 1992, and later, proposed even more drastic cuts in library funding. Many legislators, on the other hand, support the Lederberg legislation that calls for substantial increases in library funding by the year 2000.

**JP:** Changing the subject, one of the questions I came prepared to ask you concerns the idea of professionals serving in unpaid capacities in the library. I myself have been involved in various aspects of this question over the years. Do you feel that you are a better advocate for libraries without being an employed professional in one? Should you be paid? Does it make a difference?

**JG:** I think several things. I've worked with trustees, Friends, and colleagues, who have given generously of themselves for the benefit of libraries. I identify with that concept of service.



I'm not a professional lobbyist. You could hire a professional lobbyist, and he or she would have expert knowledge of the legislative process and the legislators. I have some knowledge of the legislature, and I've had some training as a lobbyist through programs offered by the American Library Association and the Secretary of State's Office. I've also visited the State House on many occasions with Edmund Beck, a Library for the Blind patron, who has lobbied for libraries as well as for other concerns.

**JP:** You're a registered lobbyist?

**JG:** I've registered as a lobbyist with the Secretary of State's Office. I haven't had many expenses. Registration was five dollars, and I've paid some parking fees. I thought that I would keep track of what the incidental expenses are this year to help the Association budget for a lobbyist, if it wishes to do so in the future.

When you consider the effectiveness of the lobbying effort, I think any lobbyist who is committed to the cause can be effective. However, situations may arise when the lobbyist must make a decision about an issue without getting any guidance from the Association. When that happens, I think it would be better to have a lobbyist, paid or unpaid, who is knowledgeable about libraries and the Association's legislative priorities. And I do know about libraries.

— James Giles is Past Director of the Cranston Public Library. Judith Paster is Co-Feature Editor of the *RILA Bulletin*, and occasional interviewer of noteworthy figures in Rhode Island's library life.

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### ***Books, Glorious Books!!***

The *RILA Bulletin* Publications committee is asking for the help of all RILA members for a special issue of the *Bulletin*! We plan to devote the better portion of the November/December issue to books and reading. We would like to assemble an informal list of librarians' favorite books. We're asking as many of you as possible to send us a particular favorite title and 1-3 lines about it (Why did you like it? Why would you recommend it to others? etc.) to be included in this issue. Whether it's something you read last week or in your childhood, we would like as eclectic an assortment as possible. E-mail, FAX, delivery system or mail responses to Mattie Gustafson at the Newport Public Library. Thank you.

## ***Report from the Nominating Committee***

At the 1994 Fall Business Meeting, the RILA membership voted several revisions to its Bylaws on nominating procedures. The major revision to the nominating procedures involved a change in the way in which candidates are elected by the membership. No longer does the Association nominate two candidates for each office for which there is a vacancy. Beginning in 1995, the Nominating Committee submits "to the Executive Board a slate consisting of one (1) candidate for each of the offices" for which there is a vacancy. Passing Executive Board approval, this slate of candidates is then introduced to the RILA membership through the July/August issue of the *RILA Bulletin*.

This change in nominating procedure precipitated another significant revision in elections procedure. No longer does the Nominating Committee conduct the election through mail ballots. Officers will henceforth be elected "by a simple majority vote at the annual Fall Business Meeting," with additional nominations accepted from the floor at that time.

Having reviewed these new revisions in Nominations and Elections procedures, it is now my privilege and pleasure to introduce you to the extremely well qualified and diversified slate of candidates for election to RILA office for 1995-1996. This slate includes one candidate each for the offices of Vice-President/President-Elect, Secretary, and Member-at-Large.

On behalf of the entire RILA membership, the Nominating Committee wishes to express its gratitude and appreciation to each of the three candidates for so generously offering their time and talents to serve our professional association and its members.

—Janet A. Levesque,  
Past-President of RILA, and Chair  
of the Nominating Committee

—Deborah R. Barchi, Coventry  
Public Library

—Patti Folsom, Ponaganset High  
School

—Carol A. Hryciw-Wing, James P.  
Adams Library, Rhode Island  
College

—Madeleine Telfeyan, RI  
Historical Society

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## *Candidate for Vice-President/President-Elect*



**SUSAN L. REED**

***Position:***

Director, Pawtucket Public Library

***Education:***

M.L.S., University of Rhode Island; B.A., Rhode Island College

***Experience:***

Pawtucket Public Library, 1971 – Present; Director, 1989 – Present; Assistant Director, 1982 – 1989; Head Reference Librarian, 1980 – 1982; Reference/Bookmobile Librarian, 1978 – 1980; Home Services Librarian, 1971 – 1978.

***Professional Activities and Organizations:***

RILA, 1971 – Present, Government Relations Committee, 1988 – Present; CLAN, Chair 1993 – 1995; Vice Chair 1993 – 1995.

***Importance of Office:***

The importance of the office of RILA Vice-President/President-Elect is related to the importance of RILA as an organization. RILA plays an important role in promoting librarianship and libraries. It represents the interests of its members and brings their concerns to the attention of the public and to legislators. It provides a way for its members to meet, exchange ideas and further their education at the yearly conference, workshops and through the *RILA Bulletin*. The officers and the executive board are responsible for helping RILA to meet its goals.

***How can RILA be an effective advocate:***

RILA can be an effective advocate for library service by representing its members' concerns to the public and to legislators. It needs to continue and expand its work with other organizations that share the goal of furthering library services, and it needs to continue to remind the public what libraries do and how important they are to the community.

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## *Candidate for Secretary*



**JAMES A. BARRETT**

***Position:***

Systems Librarian, University of Rhode Island, Kingston, Rhode Island

***Education:***

A.B. Suffolk University, Boston, Massachusetts. MLIS, University of Rhode Island

***Experience:***

State Library of Massachusetts, 1988 – 1990; Draper Laboratory, Library, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1990 – 1991; University Library, URI, 1991 – Present.

***Professional Activities and Organizations:***

American Library Association, 1987 – Present; Association for Library Collections and Technical Services, 1987 – Present; Library and Information Technology Association, 1987 – Present; Association of College and Research Libraries, 1991 – Present; Rhode Island Library Association, 1992 – Present.

***Importance of Office:***

Any office in RILA is important regardless of the duties. All are involved in the running of the Association which is moving toward a more active role in the protection and development of the library profession in this state. The Office of Secretary will give me the opportunity to meet librarians in Rhode Island as well as give me the opportunity to more fully develop the Association's role in our professional lives.

***How can RILA be an effective advocate:***

RILA should more fully develop its role as an advocate for better salaries for librarians. Librarians have historically been underpaid when compared to other similarly trained professionals. The Association with its active membership should focus more attention and publicity on the importance of librarians to the community, whether that community is academic, public, or special and insist that they be reasonably compensated.



## Candidate for Member-at-Large



**KAREN H. QUINN**

**Position:**

Head of Research Services, RI State Law Library

**Education:**

M.L.I.S. & L.T.A., University of Rhode Island. B.A., Emmanuel College

**Experience:**

Head of Research Services, RI State Law Library, 1988 – Present; Legislative Reference Librarian, RI State Library, 1985 – 1988; Library Assistant, Lincoln Public Library, 1978 – 1985.

**Professional Activities and Organizations:**

RILA (1985 – Present) Conference Committee Co-Chair 1987. COLA (1986 – Present) Program Chair, Board of Directors, Walk for Literacy Co-Chair. Law Librarians of New England (LLNE) (1985 – Present) – Membership News, Nominating Committee, American Association of Law Librarians

**Importance of Office:**

The Member-at-Large should represent all members of the Rhode Island Library Association and not one special interest section. Ideally the member should be a bridge between the needs and concerns of the membership and the goals and activities of the Executive Board.

**How can RILA be an effective advocate:**

RILA's diversity of membership is certainly one of its greatest assets. Yet to be effective at the state level, it is necessary to work together and speak with one voice. In this fast changing world, let us librarians define our role and goals for the 21st century and unite together behind those goals.

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## The Internet Exchange

### Looking for Library Jobs

by A. Paula Azar

Through common protocols, computers worldwide are communicating on the Internet exchanging job postings and networking leads by the thousands. Already information professionals, librarians, college career placement offices and a variety of commercial services have paved the way to a smooth ride through lanes of job hunting resources. Vehicles such as Jeffery Lee's "Library Jobs and Employment: A Guide to Internet Resources" have emerged on the University of Michigan's gopher and include pointers to library-related mailing lists, electronic journals, telnet sites, gopher servers and world wide web resources. Librarians looking for employment should start their job hunt here.

[<http://www.wpi.edu/Depts/Library/jobguide/libjobs.txt>]

"Employment Opportunities and Job Resources on the Internet," created by Margaret Riley, Coordinator of Networked Resources at Worcester Polytechnic Institute's Gordon Library, is a one of the most comprehensive listings highlighting job and career information by broad occupational category.

[<http://www.wpi.edu/~mfriley/jobguide.html>]

Another comprehensive listing of online employment information is "The Catapult," maintained by Leo Charette, Director of Career Services at the College of William & Mary. It is the starting point for many career service professionals as well as job hunters, linking both to hundreds of resources.

[<http://www.wm.edu/catapult/catapult.html>]

The Internet provides a collage of overlapping resources, including services offered by nonprofit organizations, recruitment firms, universities, companies and government agencies. In addition to job postings look for discussion groups, newsletters, bulletin boards, news groups and freenets to uncover networking opportunities.

Many sites on the Internet provide job postings, but one of the few targeting the library community is the University of Illinois' Placement Online Search Service. Search, view, or download postings received by this university's GSLIS. Refine your search by library type, experience level, geographic area, minimum salary or a combination of the same. Get a listing of the newest jobs posted or search for international positions in library science. This site is frequently updated and should be a mandatory stop in your search for employment on the Net. *Telnet* to

[[alexia.lis.uiuc.edu](http://alexia.lis.uiuc.edu)], **login** [jobs], **password** [Urbaign]

In addition to job databases, the Internet provides a variety of effective online networking resources. Learn to use discussion groups, usenet newsgroups and freenets to interact with professionals in libraries worldwide, discuss practical issues and exchange valu-



able information. Traditionally, networking has been the most important component of the job hunting process. The Internet becomes a powertool for networking, allowing librarians to interact with their colleagues around the globe.

Discussion groups are a valuable resource for meeting people and introducing yourself. Messages to members who subscribe to a mailing list are distributed through e-mail. On the Library of Rhode Island (LORI) web page you'll find a link to Library-Oriented Lists and Serials. Maintained by University of Houston's Steve Bonario, Systems Librarian, this site provides a current listing of Internet and Bitnet lists and electronic serials. More importantly, instructions on how to subscribe are provided. You'll find practical job-related issues discussed, as well as vacancies posted.

#### RULES OF THE ROAD

1. Avoid gridlock! Remember peak hours are usually from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Start your research either early in the day or late in the evening.
2. When using discussion groups lurk before posting. Find out what the group's purpose is and make sure any messages you send are appropriate to that group.
3. Remember, the same job hunting etiquette you use offline applies online. When posting messages or replying to an advertisement through e-mail compose all correspondence like a real letter—because it is! Proofreading is essential.
4. Make a list of your best and most valuable sources on the 'Net. Create bookmarks and visit them as part of your daily job hunting routine.
5. While evaluating resources check for timeliness. Do you find the vacancies have expired? Visit sites that frequently update their material and remember information moves fast on the Internet — make sure you go the speed!

## Preservation Update

by Ann M. Dodge

#### Recent Articles

In the June, 1995, issue of *Wilson Library Bulletin* Sally Buchanan writes about the problems involved with preservation and access for photographic collections. She discussed the importance of properly identifying photographic processes. She details the proper storage of photographs, not only the desired environmental conditions but also the various types of enclosures needed for different photographs.

Lew Bellardo writes in the April, 1995 issue of *Abbey Newsletter* on "Low Energy, Low Technology, Low

Toxicity Approaches to Preservation." He covers the following topics:

Facilities Location and Construction  
Disaster Control  
Security  
Fire Detection/Control  
Temperature and Humidity Control  
Particulate and Pollution Protection  
Light  
Mold Control  
Insect Control  
Handling  
Exhibition  
Housings  
Treatment  
Reformatting

A couple of short pieces have appeared in the May issue of *American Libraries* that list several instances of books from public libraries that have been vandalized. "Since the beginning of the year a book mutilator has been slicing through more than 20 library stacks in northern California, leaving behind empty bindings and distraught librarians." (page 391). Also in the May issue, "More than 24 books dealing with human sexuality have been cut or mutilated since October in the Corvallis-Benton County (Oreg.) Public Library." (page 393).

Lest you think the above is strictly a West Coast problem, in the March issue of *American Libraries*, there is a report on the arrest of a former occasional worker at Harvard's Widener Library on "charges of stealing and defacing several hundred thousand dollars worth of books from, and writing extortion letters to, Harvard and Northeastern University, in Boston." (page 210).

Finally, under the category of it can happen to anyone, the June 5, 1995 issue of *Newsweek* reports on an apparent theft from the Vatican Library, (see page 37). The article is entitled "Heist at the Vatican - Art Theft: Did a devoted medieval scholar take a knife to pages of a rare illuminated manuscript?"

#### New Publications Available

The fourth Gaylord Preservation Pathfinder is now available. This pamphlet, "An Introduction to Book Repair" guides readers through the issues to consider when deciding how to repair books. Its illustrated descriptions of supplies, tools, and equipment will help you select the most appropriate products to care for your book collections." It is available free of charge from Gaylord by calling 1-800-634-6307. The other three Preservation Pathfinders cover the following topics:

- No. 1 An Introduction to Preservation
- No. 2 Archival Storage of Paper
- No. 3 Archival Storage of Photographic Materials.

*Protecting Your Collections: A Manual of Archival Security* by Gregor Trinkhaus-Randall was recently



published by the Society of American Archivists. This title is available from the publisher for \$30 plus \$6 shipping and handling. The discounted price for SAA members is \$25. The address for SAA is

600 South Federal Street  
Suite 504  
Chicago, Illinois 60605  
or by phoning their Publications Office at  
(312) 922-0140 ext. 21.

### **Fall Workshops**

On September 7, 1995, Shereyn Ogden will talk on "Long-Range Planning for Preservation and Conservation" at Old Sturbridge Village. For more information call Kim O'Leary at the Northeast Document Conservation Center (508) 470-1010.

On October 2, 1995, Beth Patkus will give a presentation on disaster planning at the New England Library Association meeting in Providence.

If there are any subjects concerning preservation that you would like to see covered in future columns, please get in touch with Ann Dodge at the John Hay Library, Brown University, Providence, RI 02912, or 863-1502.

## ***NELA '95 in Providence***

Rhode Island librarians and library staff will have an opportunity October 1 through 3, 1995 to mingle with their counterparts from throughout New England when NELA holds its annual conference at the Providence Convention Center. This year's conference, whose theme is *On the Edge*, will provide more than 35 programs and discussion groups on a wide range of topics.

For those interested in technology and its impact on the ways libraries deliver services, Hope Tillman, Director of Libraries at Babson College will present a workshop on Sunday, October 1 on the Internet for "intermediate" users. The registration fee for the workshop is \$25 and enrollment is limited to 50. The workshop will be held at Roger Williams University's new downtown facility. Experienced coaches will be available to tailor the hands-on portion of the workshop to the interests of the participants.

Other conference programs on the topic of technology include NEMICRO's drop-in sessions on Monday which will feature computer tricks and tips demonstrated by NEMICRO members, a program which will help librarians develop policies for use of the Internet by patrons, and a program on Local Area Networks. Sharon Fredette of the Warwick Public Library will represent the public library viewpoint as a panelist at the LAN program. Rick Gates, creator of the *Internet Hunts*, will speak at a program jointly spon-

sored by the New England chapter of ACRL and NELA's Academic Section.

NELA's Paraprofessional Special Interest Group is on the verge of becoming a section of NELA. In addition to an organizational meeting, the SIG is sponsoring a program on career development for paraprofessionals. Tinker Massey, a nationally known advocate for support staff will offer advice on how to make a "job" into a "career."

If the number of library building projects is any indication, New England's economy is rebounding, and NELA's programs are also reflecting the trend. Jay Litman of Extrados Architects in Providence and Connie Lachowicz, Director of the South Kingstown Public Library will present a case study of two branch renovations including planning, design and implementation. An informal discussion on Monday afternoon will focus on the challenges of library building or renovation projects. The session will bring together exhibitors in the areas of architecture and library furnishings in an examination of the building process. On Tuesday representatives of the Connecticut State Library and the Williamantic and Middletown (CT) Library Service Centers will demonstrate how techniques from "This Old House" were used to "make over" the Andover (CT) Public Library.

One of the best tools for getting books into the hands of children is the booktalk. Joni Richards Bodart, author of *The Book Talker*, will present a workshop full of tips and strategies for booktalking to middle graders. The Jordan-Miller Storytelling Program on Sunday afternoon will feature John Langstaff, children's author and balladeer.

Other programs will address such topics as library management, security, service to young adults, intellectual freedom, reorganizing technical services, community reading celebrations, Christian fiction, and reader's advisory.

Rhode Island will have a chance to show its stuff to conference attendees from around New England. A special trolley tour on Sunday afternoon will stop at three Providence libraries - the Rhode Island Historical Society Library, the John Hay Library at Brown University and the Providence Athenaeum. David Macaulay, author of *The Way Things Work*, will be the speaker at the NELA Annual Banquet on Sunday evening at the Biltmore. Melody Allen is planning Monday morning's "Limber Librarians" walk. The 2 1/2 mile guided walk through the historic East Side will showcase its many literary connections. Rumor has it that a printed guide to the tour will be available for those who can't or won't get up for the early morning (7 a.m.) walk. Providence Public Library will open its doors on Monday evening for a gala reception. Simmons, URI and Southern Connecticut will hold separate coffee and dessert receptions at the library. Rhode Island storytellers will be on hand for an adult



storytelling session. PPL's computer lab will also be open for demonstrations of Internet access via LORI and the Ocean State Free-Net. And of perhaps primary importance, refreshments will be served.

The NELA Conference will have more exhibitors than ever thanks to the expansive exhibit hall at the Convention Center. The exhibits showcase the newest and best products the exhibitors have to offer.

So, mark your calendars, reserving October 1, 2 and 3, and plan on attending the NELA Conference in Providence.

## *Sweet Home Chicago: ALA Annual '95*

FRANK P. IACONO  
RILA CHAPTER COUNCILOR

Lake Michigan dappled with sunshine and sailboats, Grant Park awash with tasters, concession stands, and carnival rides for the Taste of Chicago food extravaganza, and McCormick Place abuzz with library folk in record numbers are some of the images that linger when reflecting upon the recent American Library Association Annual Conference, once again held on ALA's home turf, the great city of Chicago. The conference proved to be historic in that an all-time attendance record of 24,541 was set, breaking the previous record established in San Francisco in 1992. And when all was said and done it seemed safe to say that the only blues people came away with were the recorded kind on sale at the venerable Rose's Records.

The conference began on a very positive note and pretty much stayed that way despite a few minor controversies that spiced up the proceedings. People for the most part arrived feeling good about the Association, confident that their overwhelming approval of the dues increase and, by definition, support of ALA Goal 2000 was already paying great dividends. Chief among these is the expansion of the ALA Washington Office, both in terms of personnel and office space. The ALA Washington Office will move to spiffy new quarters in August and will add eleven permanent positions by the end of FY96. Carol Henderson, Director of the ALA Washington Office, proudly introduced the first of the new staffers, and an impressive bunch they are, particularly wunderkind Andrew Magpantay (he's so young), the new Director of the Office for Information Technology Policy (OITP), who exuded confidence, grace, and a firm grasp of the issues at hand though only on the job for less than two weeks. And conference-goers were also appreciative of the news that outgoing President Arthur Curley's "Library Advocacy Now (LAN)" project was having an definite impact on the powers

that be in Washington and at home (though, as we in RI can attest, it's a never ending battle). LAN will continue under President Betty Turock, with an emphasis on advocacy training for trustees and friends. Betty's theme this year, "Equity on the Information Super Highway," ties in nicely with ALA Goal 2000 and LAN.

Contesting for first place in the "fly in the ointment" category were a flap about Ameritech's sponsorship of the Opening General Session on Saturday, continued grumbling by representatives of the Exhibits Round Table (ERT) over the move to New York for Annual 1996, and confusion over the rather "off the wall" (an indelicate description I admit) restructuring of ALA proposal put forth just prior to the Conference by the Organizational Self Study Committee (OSSC). Ameritech's six-figure contribution to the Fund for America's Libraries - with no stipulations on how ALA spends the money - allowed for the sponsorship of the opening general session, which was billed as the "Ameritech Opening General Session." This made some people nervous and fearful that ALA was selling its soul to a corporate giant. Both Executive Director Elizabeth Martinez and Fund Director Peggy Barber, dutifully took note of this reaction and agreed to revisit and publicize sponsorship guidelines that will, hopefully, make everyone comfortable with ALA's pursuit of the major funding that is available to it from the private sector. As far as ALA Annual 1996 is concerned, the conference will take place in New York July 6-10 and the exhibitors have been assured that ALA will be making it as easy on the exhibitors as possible in further conference planning. Time will tell. I do expect that ALA will not be deselecting a conference site quite so cavalierly (at least on the surface of it) in the future. As for the OSSC restructuring plan, let's say that everyone got off easy. Instead of debating the pros and cons of the document (though this certainly was done informally in the hallways and on the buses and formally in Council and Chapter caucuses), the OSSC informed Council that they were presenting it as the final work of the committee and wanted a Structure Revision Task Force appointed to take what it wanted to from the proposal and, if it deemed necessary, come up with a new restructuring proposal over the course of the next year or so. The two most vocal camps regarding restructuring were the "if it ain't broke, don't fix it" folks versus those who would characterize ALA as an un-user-friendly, unfocused, unresponsive bureaucracy in need of an overhaul. Your humble councilor feels that there is definitely some room for fine tuning, but that inventing an acceptable new structure (and the key word is acceptable) is probably not how the organization should be spending its time and money. Council approved the formation of the Structure Revision Task Force, whose composition reflects a good cross section



of the organization and, once again, time will tell as to how successful they will be.

Because of space constraints, I'll mention only two other Council actions. Council approved a new *ALA Code of Ethics*, which speaks not only to the practices of professional librarians but also to trustees and library staff members. And though it is badly needed, there was no consensus that the Intellectual Freedom Committee's draft *Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks: an Interpretation of the Bill of Rights*, accurately represented the viewpoints of the national library community that is ALA. A revised document is expected at Midwinter in San Antonio.

I would be remiss not to mention some of the activities of Chapter Relations Committee (CRC) on which I serve. In an ongoing effort to improve the necessary and vital working relationship between ALA and its fifty-five chapters, the CRC is working on a new long-range plan and also has adopted guidelines for membership forums at state conferences. The importance of chapters in the eyes of ALA's leaders is not to be understated, a fact underscored by the appearances of Elizabeth Martinez, Arthur Curley, Betty Turock, Peggy Barber, Andrew Magpantay, Mary Somerville (President-Elect), Judith Krug (Office of Intellectual Freedom Director) and Stuart Whitwell (Associate Publisher of *American Libraries*) at meetings of the CRC. Stuart Whitwell, it should be noted, was on hand to solicit comments on the new look of *American Libraries* and to get ideas on how best to expand coverage of chapter news.

Finally, you all should know that Bruce Daniels, former DSLS Director, is running for ALA Treasurer. I attended a campaign kickoff for Bruce, who as a member of the ALA Executive Board, knows what kind of challenge managing a \$19 million budget will be and eagerly has embraced the opportunity to do so. And you also should know that the Elizabeth Futas Memorial Fund has already received over five thousand dollars in donations and plans are under way for a special fundraiser to add to this amount. Donna Dufault, RILA President-Elect, has all the details. The purpose of the fund will be to honor emerging library leaders who have exhibited a strong commitment to mentoring, which Liz considered to be a responsibility of all library professionals and one she took very seriously.

A packet of information gathered at the Conference was distributed to members of RILA's Executive Board at its July meeting and is available for the asking to anyone who would like one.

—Frank Iacono is Reference Librarian at the Dept. of State Library Services.

## PEOPLE

MARGARET GORDON, has been appointed Government Documents Librarian at the RI State Library.

CYNTHIA LOGAN, former Director of the Mohr Memorial Library in Johnston, is now Director of the Middletown Public Library.

ROBIN MEDEIROS recently was named Assistant Director of the Attleboro Public Library.

JUDY MUNSON is the new Children's Librarian at the Kingston Free Library.

## BULLETIN BOARD

There will not be a joint RILA/RIEMA conference in 1996. While the RILA Executive Board voted its approval of another joint outing in 1996, the RIEMA Executive Board decided that such a conference would not be in the best interest of the association.

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Jessica Wilson of the South Kingstown Public Library has put together a new publication entitled, *An Index to Foreign Language Collections in Rhode Island Public Libraries*. Request copies from Jessica at the Peace Dale Library, 1057 Kingstown, Road, Peace Dale, RI 02883, Tel (401) 789-1555, e-mail jessicawn@dsl.rhinet.gov.

~\*~\*~

The Massachusetts Library Association's (MLA) Children's Issues Section (CIS) has just published a revised edition of *Standards for Public Library Service to Children in Massachusetts*. This document was prepared by a committee, appointed by MLA, of library directors, children's librarians, and other professionals who are committed to ensuring high-quality public library service to children in the Commonwealth.

This 26-page document includes recommendations for children's services, staff, collections, programs, and facilities. In addition, it includes the MLA CIS's and the Massachusetts School Library Media Association's (MSLMA) recent joint publications titled: *School/Public Library Services to Children: A Common Purpose with Similarities and Differences and Joint Statement on Collection Development in Schools and Public Libraries*.

Copies may be ordered for ten dollars each [five dollars for MLA members] from: MLA, 707



Turnpike Street, North Andover, MA 01845; (508) 686-5843; FAX (508) 685-4422. Members of the MLA CIS will receive a complimentary copy.



Rhode Island's Annual Jonnycake Storytelling Festival, featuring **Gail Ross** and **Len Cabral** will be held on September 22nd, 23rd and 24rd at Peace Dale, RI. The Festival offers fun, family entertainment, workshops, concerts, and free performances. For information/reservations, write Cathy Larlham, South Kingstown Parks and Recreation, 325 Columbia Street, Peace Dale, RI 02883 or call (401) 789-9301.



## **American Library Association Intellectual Freedom Action Network**

In 1993, 697 complaints against library materials were reported to the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom. As of December 31, 1994, 760 complaints had been received. Incidents of censorship reported to ALA are steadily increasing. A wide array of materials are subject to attack; recently, library bulletin board displays and works of art displayed in libraries also have been targets.

In response to these attacks, OIF has developed an Action Network. There is no fee to become a member of the network; what we need is your time. Members are asked to act as the "eyes" and "ears" for intellectual freedom.

What would be expected of me if I join the network?

- Read the newspaper and watch your local TV programs for incidents of censorship, and report these immediately to OIF. (You can report to us through Internet, at the address provided below. If you don't have Internet access, U.S. mail will be just fine!) Also, look for information on pressure groups that are forming or are becoming active in your community. Send us any information you come across.
- Monitor listservs and computer bulletin boards looking for incidents of censorship and information on pressure groups that are forming in your area. Report this information to OIF.
- Attend library board, school board and local

government meetings. More than two-thirds of the materials challenged in 1993-94 were in school libraries or school curricula. Don't wait for a controversy to erupt; make your views known before this happens.

- Be willing to lend your support to someone who is facing a challenge and to respond to requests for support from OIF on controversies in your area.
- Tell others about the Intellectual Freedom Action Network.

*American Library Association  
Office for Intellectual Freedom  
50 E. Huron Street  
Chicago, IL 60611-2795  
(312) 280-4223  
1-800-545-2433, ext. 4223  
U22538@uicvm.uic.edu*



*(continued from back page)*

A few last words about Jim Giles. My appreciation for him and what he has accomplished in the Cranston Public Library system is boundless. In the last days of putting the manuscript together, Jim and I would drop off sections at one of the Cranston libraries, to be edited and picked up by the other. Hence, I got to see the Auburn branch, which features in so much of Jim's days at Cranston.

My only contact with Auburn was the fact that several years ago, on Election Day, Karen McGrath, Librarian at Auburn, asked me to go to one of the Cranston polling places to show support for the referendum that meant a new library building for Auburn. That was the election that produced the funds for that library. It's an attractive building flanked by two large trees, a front garden dotted with wildflowers. The interior is pleasant and welcoming. This is the library the residents of Auburn have wanted since the middle thirties, and which Jim Giles played a crucial part in getting for them.

But, I still think my favorite image of Jim Giles occurred about five years ago at the NELA Conference in Hyannis. Under the tremendously competent direction of Fran Farrell Bergeron, several RILA members, including Jim, presented a musical interpretation of the *Threepenny Opera* in library terms. Jim, of course, was Mack the Knife. His lovely Irish tenor and ingenuous presentation made the RILA skit and won it the prize. I like to think of Jim singing, even as he did to the Leisure Learners or the Auburn Library Club of other years. It's a kind of measure of devotion, a strength of commitment, that characterizes the librarian and the man.



## Editor's Notebook

JUDITH PASTER

Jim Giles is the sixth subject I've interviewed in the series we've called "Conversations with ..." These have been six outstanding members of the library community, some I have thought of myself, others have been suggested to me by colleagues. Each has been responsive, helpful, entering into our temporary partnership with verve and good will.

It's not an easy job. As Jim was winding down the editing of the manuscript, getting it ready for printing, he said, "Gee, this is hard work!"

What that work entails is a process which begins by my calling the subject, proposing the project, and making an appointment to meet. These interviews have taken me to interesting places I might not have seen, such as Rick Robbin's office at the ACI or the library of the Naval War College in Newport.

The "conversations" themselves take about two hours. I prepare questions in advance, which I use as insurance against my mind's going blank! I use a simple tape cassette recorder to tape the entire interview. When the session is over, the subject is free to go back to whatever he or she was doing when I interrupted them. I, however, must begin the long and painstaking task of transcribing the tape.

The first thing I had to overcome was listening to the sound of my own voice! You listen, and think, "Do I really giggle that much?" or "Stop interrupting every word he says!" I virtually live with the subject's voice for a month or so, every day chipping away at the tape. I make every effort to make that transcript read exactly as the subject had spoken. My goal is not only to present his or her ideas accurately, but also to give a rhythm to the speech, so that it reads as if the person were talking directly to you.

After the transcription I have about fifty double-spaced pages to work with. Now comes the creative and the critical part. I read it carefully with a pencil in hand, deciding what to keep and what to discard. I try to discern a pattern – is there a beginning, a middle, an end. (Yes, it's a lot like writing papers in school!) Once that's done, I start all over again with the manuscript, editing it, rearranging it, whatever makes it read well.

That draft then goes back to the subject who goes over it with changes, new paragraphs, corrections, clarifications. All of my "partners in conversation" have been very careful with their editing of the manuscript, most conscientious, most professional.

I then go through the manuscript again, incorporating their changes, and gradually, there emerges the "conversation" you have before you.

*(continued on page 15)*

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