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January & February 1997

President's Message

SUSAN REED

In the last issue of the *Bulletin*, I noted that the Executive Board had approved the legislative agenda developed by the RILA Government Relations Committee (GRC). Foremost on this agenda is state funding for all costs related to membership and participation in CLAN, the Cooperating Libraries Automated Network, which counts all but three of the State's public libraries as members and provides service to 99% of the State's population at their local public or branch library. This would cost the State approximately \$1 million.

The Government Relations Committee led by David Macksam and Dale Thompson continues to lead the way in promoting this legislation and is optimistic we can look forward to its passage. But we need your help and support to meet our goal. I would like to thank all of our members who were able to attend the Annual Libraries on the Hill Day on February 12th. The strong showing by members of all of Rhode Island's library organizations and agencies was an important first step in the library advocacy effort. To keep the ball rolling please try to attend one of the six legislative breakfasts planned around the

(continued on page 7)

A Good Work in Progress: The Alan Shawn Feinstein High School for Public Service Library

NAOMI CALDWELL-WOOD

Just mention the name Alan Shawn Feinstein to almost any Rhode Islander and he or she will be able to share information about the various charitable causes Mr. Feinstein has sponsored through the auspices of the Feinstein Foundation. From Brown University's World Hunger Program to the Good Deeds Journals distributed at numerous private and public schools throughout Rhode Island, Mr.

Feinstein is known for sharing his good fortune and time to try to make the world a better place. But how

many realize that Mr. Feinstein donated half a million dollars to the Providence Public Education Fund over a three year period to help establish a new public high school complete with a state-of-the-art library?

In the fall of 1994, the Alan Shawn Feinstein High School for Public Service opened its doors to 160 students and twelve teachers. It has since grown to a little over 300 students and 27 faculty. Feinstein High School is among the first magnet high schools in the nation to develop a curriculum which is focused on the values of compassion, initiative, leadership, integrity, and service.

Each student's educational experience is essentially personalized:

complete with individual service learning plans, an advisory system, and "advocates" for each student. To foster a stronger support system, the entire school is organized into small houses with interdisciplinary teaching teams. The creators of the Feinstein High School Plan borrowed many ideas from

Photo: Joe McGovern, DSLR



Naomi Caldwell-Wood and some avid library users

successful middle and high school programs that exist throughout the United States and combined these ideas with their vision for a public service school.

The curriculum is derived from the experience of service itself, reflected in writing and discussion, research and problem-solving activities. The curriculum is interdisciplinary and integrated with the student's field experiences and with classroom content.

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Issues and their ethical implications are explored, debated, and acted upon throughout the school's curriculum and programs of activities. School values are reflected in the school's tone, code of behavior, governance structure, assessment system and interactions between students and adults.

The assessment process is performance based. All evaluations are written narratives which address the student's progress toward achieving the Feinstein Outcomes. Each student must maintain a journal, provide a portfolio, and deliver a grand exhibition (public presentation) before a panel consisting of faculty, students, parents, and agency representatives before advancement to the next level (grade) is possible.

All members of the Feinstein High School community including faculty and students must participate in an interview process and agree to adhere to the school's philosophy and contribute to the community at large by performing community service. Understanding these requirements, I interviewed to become part of the Feinstein community during the summer of 1994. I had just completed the course work and exam requirements for the Ph.D. program in Library Science at the University of Pittsburgh and looked forward to returning to Rhode Island with my newly gained knowledge and experiences.

I can remember riding by the facility that was being renovated to house the school located at 455 Elmwood Avenue. As I looked at the former office building wondering if it would be completed in time for the September opening, my thoughts returned to a conversation I had with MaryKay Schnare, librarian at Nathan Bishop Middle School, who first told me about the Feinstein School. MaryKay indicated that the library would be a state-of-the-art facility and

that I would really enjoy building a library and working with teachers to develop a viable program. I looked forward to walking into the library and simply flipping a switch.

On the opening day, I entered a building that was a work in progress. Workmen were busily hanging dry wall in certain areas and painting walls in others. Labor disputes over the summer had slowed building renovations. A few classrooms on each of the three levels were completed. The only two rooms that were completed on the upper level of the building were the computer lab and the library. The library was completely void. No chairs. No tables. No telephone. No resources. And no technology. A librarian's worst nightmare.

Mr. Feinstein learned about the empty library on the day of the school's dedication and contributed many useful books from his personal collection. These books became the first items loaned from the Feinstein High School library. The students were thrilled to have books. It was amazing. Usually, it is a chore to get some students to read for pleasure. Not having materials when we opened actually compelled students not only to desire books, but actually to read them. It just goes to prove that something good can come from something bad, and instant gratification isn't everything.

With the help of Anne Hird, then Director of Library Power Providence, I learned about a cooperative agreement between the Providence Public Library and the Providence School Department.

Under this agreement, I was informed that as the school librarian I could borrow materials from various Providence Public Library branches on a long-term basis and that a delivery service was in the works.

Together with the assistance of Mrs. Harris, South Providence Branch, Kathleen Vernon, Knight Memorial,

and especially Pam Gollis, Shared Resources, Providence Public Central, the Feinstein faculty and students had access to the information they needed to meet the requirements of a vigorous academic curriculum with a community service focus. As a result of this experience, I gained a better understanding of what Tatonka Iotanka (Sitting Bull) meant when he said, "Let us put our heads together and see what



Photos: Joe McGovern, DSLIS

Going online at Feinstein

kind of world we can make for our children." The members of the local library community gathered together and provided help at the point of need. Without their help, it would have been an almost impossible situation.

I awoke from the nightmare of having no materials slowly. While waiting for materials to arrive, I surveyed the student population to learn more about their interests and polled the faculty to learn what projects and units they were going to share with students. Patrick Wood, library consultant, worked with me to create a policy and procedures manual. Then one day the oak bookcases and circulation center arrived, followed by matching tables and chairs, a desk, window shades, and a start-up collection from the Follett Book Company. This collection was selected based upon a faculty survey conducted before I was interviewed. Finally the "tools" we had all been eagerly awaiting arrived: the computers.

Now we have what can be considered a fully functional state-of-the-art public high school library in Providence. The library uses a Follett Unison Integrated Library System which provides cataloging, acquisitions, and public access. Eight HP Vectra 486/66 VL computers, each with individual CD-ROM drives, are connected



The long view of the library

to the server through a Novel network. An HP Laserjet 4 printer is also connected to the network. These terminals can access a Meridian CD-ROM server. In addition, faculty and students have access to the Internet from the library.

The print collection includes a reference, magazine, fiction and a nonfiction section which focuses heavily on the social sciences. A special professional collection of materials provides information about community and public service education, integrated learning, school reform, and portfolio assessment. A video collection is also available. Access to the collection is made possible via the library network which includes access to many CD-ROM databases. Among the databases found on the network are: Academic Abstracts, ERIC, Facts on File News Digest, General Science Source, Health Source, Humanities Source, SIRS, Magazine Articles Summaries, Magill's Masterplots, Magill's Survey of Science, and Vocational Search.

These resources are used to enable students to move through the school's three stages: Explorer, Apprentice and Scholar. Progression through the stages is based on the student's ability to manage increasing responsibility, skills, and personal growth.

Each year teachers make more progress toward building a magnet program that is more interdisciplinary, integrated, and responsive to the changing needs of our community. Each year I make more progress toward integrating information literacy skills into the overall curriculum. It is a challenging and rewarding work in progress.

Through my experiences at Feinstein High School I have been reminded of two important values I learned years ago in library school: patience and working together to effect positive change. And I hope I'll be able to pass these on to the students at Feinstein High School for Public Service.

— Naomi Caldwell-Wood is Librarian at Feinstein High School for Public Service in Providence

PEOPLE

Jim Barrett, RILA Secretary and former Systems Librarian at URI, recently was named Systems/Technical Services Librarian at Suffolk University's Law School Library. Jim's contributions to RILA both as Secretary and Webmaster were immense; on behalf of the entire Association we wish him great success in his new position.

Barbara Bourgerly, formerly Acquisitions Coordinator at Johnson & Wales University Library, is joining the Reference staff of the Pawtucket Public Library.

Frank Kellerman, Biomedical Reference/Collection Development Librarian at Brown University, is the author of *Introduction to Health Science Librarianship: A Management Handbook*, recently published by Greenwood Press.

Dr. Yan Ma recently joined the faculty of the URI Graduate School of Library and Information Studies as an Assistant Professor. Before joining the GSLIS she was an Assistant Professor at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Dr. Ma is teaching Information Science for Librarians and Organization of Library Materials during the 1997 Spring semester.

Kathy Odean, Lower School Librarian at Moses Brown, recently appeared on "The Today Show," to promote her new book *Great Books for Girls*. Published by Ballantine, the book is a guide to 600 children's books that feature strong girl characters.

Joan Ress Reeves is the American Library Trustees Association's Regional Vice President for Region I (New England).

Michael Silvia recently was appointed Electronic Resources Librarian at Lincoln Public Library.

BULLETIN BOARD

The Coalition of Library Advocates (COLA) announced the recipients of their annual awards at their business meeting held in Governor Lincoln Almond's Executive Chamber on "Libraries on the Hill Day," February 12th. The award winners were:

Sweetheart of the Year: Barbara Weaver, Chief Information Officer at the Department of Administration's Office of Library and Information Service, for outstanding library leadership at the state level.

Outstanding Friends Group - Community Outreach: Friends of the Jamestown Philomenian Library.

Outstanding Friends Group - Programming: Friends of the Smith-Hill Branch of the Providence Public Library.

Outstanding Friends Group - Fundraising: Friends of the Woonsocket-Harris Public Library.

Outstanding Friends Group - Distinguished Service: Knightsville Library Association.



Having completed its relocation, the former R.I. Department of State Library Services (DSLS) is now officially the Office of Library and Information Services (OLIS), a unit of the R.I. Department of Administration headed by Barbara Weaver, Chief Information Officer. The OLIS address is: OLIS, R.I. Department Administration, One Capitol Hill, Providence, RI 02908. The Office has retained its 277-2726 telephone number, but it does have a new fax number which is 277-4195. OLIS sections are located on the Ground Floor (Professional Collection, Media Services, and ILL Delivery); Second Floor (Talking Books Plus, Information Processing, and ILL Clearinghouse); and the Fourth Floor (Administration, Children's Services, and Data Coordinator).



Rhode Island Library Association

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The Rhode Island Educational Media Association (RIEMA) Annual Conference will take place on March 21st at the Providence Marriott. Among the featured presenters are Nancy Polette, nationally recognized authority on children's literature, Seymour Simon, author of more than 150 books for children and young adults, and Web/Internet wizard and school librarian, Ellen Berne. RILA members are offered the same RIEMA member registration rate of \$55 before March 7 and \$70 thereafter.



The Connecticut Library Association (CLA) has extended a special offer to Rhode Island librarians who would like to attend their 1997 conference to be held April 1-2 at the Radisson Hotel in Cromwell. Rhode Islanders are being allowed to register for the conference at CLA member rates (\$35 for a single day or \$49 for both days); preregistration is mandatory. A buffet lunch at \$16.95 is also offered each day. In addition to a wide variety of programs and workshops, the conference will feature an Internet room where new and/or experienced users will be given hands-on training and a wide array of vendor exhibits. CLA is planning future conferences closer to Rhode Island and among the sites mentioned is Foxwoods Casino. CLA also has indicated that it would like to explore the idea of a combined CLA/RILA conference sometime in the future. Anyone who would like the official CLA 1997 Conference program should contact Frank Iacono at the Office of Library and Information Services at 277-2726 or frankio@dsl.rhilinet.gov.



RILA's Conference Committee is busily planning the Annual Spring conference. The Committee recently announced that the conference theme will be "Back To Basics: Foundations for the Future" and that it will take place at Salve Regina University on May 29-30. Stay tuned for more information this Spring.

IFC News Notes

CARLA M. WEISS

This occasional column reports on this year's activities of the RILA Intellectual Freedom Committee and general intellectual freedom issues. Please address suggestions for future columns and/or questions to me.

As chair of the IFC, I was asked to serve on a panel for the IFC of RIEMA at their annual conference on March 28, 1996. The other panelists were Xue Di, a visiting fellow from Brown University who left China after the Tiananmen Square incident; Judie Porter, a librarian from the Portsmouth School District; and Michael Chiusano from Beverly, Massachusetts, who represented Family Friendly Libraries. Much of the session was devoted to a very lively exchange between the audience and Mr. Chiusano on what is considered censorship in libraries.

As it does every year, the IFC purchased the Banned Books Week kit from ALA. In 1996, Banned Books Week was observed September 28 through October 4. BBW kits and related material from earlier years are available from the IFC or DSLS. One item in the kit is the *Banned Books Resource Guide* which includes a list of books challenged in the current year. A copy of this list was sent to Portsmouth Free Public Library for a display to celebrate Banned Books Week.

The James P. Adams Library of Rhode Island College also presented a display featuring books the library owns which have been challenged over the years. The display included a section on the Communications Decency Act and news clips on challenges to the law. A number of students, who were enrolled in a class on censorship at the college, found the display useful and borrowed the library's copy of the *Banned Books Resource Guide*.

At present, the IFC is planning for its session at the RILA annual conference where we hope to discuss library policies on Internet access. Timothy Barmann, in his November 24, 1996 *Providence Journal* column, reported

on use of the World Wide Web in Rhode Island public libraries and official policies in place at some of these libraries. Warwick Public Library's policy is that it is the parent's responsibility to monitor their children's use of the Internet. At Lincoln Public Library, minors must have a parent or guardian sign a waiver to allow them to use the library's Web terminal.

In October, the North Kingstown Free Library's Board of Trustees passed an age-unrestrictive Internet policy. Library staff agreed to monitor use by minors up to the age of 18, and children under the age of 13 were allowed Internet access in the Young Readers Department.

If anyone is interested, DSLS has been collecting sample policies on Internet use in libraries.

The IFC is in the process of updating the *Intellectual Freedom Handbook* which was published in 1989. We anticipate the revision to be completed at the end of 1997 or early 1998.

On the national front, the U.S. Supreme Court has announced that it will hear the government's appeal of the challenge to the Communications Decency Act, passed last February by Congress, and declared unconstitutional in June by a special three-judge federal panel in Philadelphia. The case, titled *Reno v. ACLU*, will determine the future of freedom of speech in cyberspace. It is expected to be heard in late March or early April, 1997.

An article in the November 13 issue of the *Providence Journal*, reprinted from the *New York Times*, reported on the Wal-Mart discount chain's policy of not accepting sound recordings affixed with parental advisory labels. Record companies have been editing and removing songs considered offensive, thus altering the original version, so that the sound recordings can be sold at Wal-Mart. The article points out that Wal-Mart is the single largest seller of pop music recordings in the country. In many areas of the United States, Wal-Mart is the only retailer for miles around where sound recordings are sold.

The October and November issues of *Intellectual Freedom Action News*, published by ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom, contain state-by-state analysis of the statutes governing both confidentiality of library records and obscenity. Please contact the Committee if you would like a copy.

Some new Websites of interest are:

Freedom of Expression Resources of the Cyberspace Law Center:
<http://www.cybersquirrel.com/clc/expression.html>

Free Expression Clearinghouse:
<http://www.freeexpression.org>

For tips on planning an effective strategy for working with the media in a challenge situation, visit Open Stacks at:
<http://www.ala.org/alaeditions.html>

— *Carla M. Weiss is Reference Librarian at the James P. Adams Library of Rhode Island College and Chair of the RILA Intellectual Freedom Committee*

President's Message

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State and invite your legislators, trustees, and civic leaders to come along with you. Also call or write your elected representatives in the General Assembly to let them know that state funding for CLAN will enable public libraries to allocate the money they save on CLAN costs to new and improved library service. And if you would like to become more involved in lobbying at the State House, give me a call and we can add your name to RILA's telephone tree.

Library advocacy begins with each of us doing what we can to get the message across. Your help can make the difference.

*Susan Reed, President
Rhode Island Library Association*

The Young Adult Round Table: A Force for Excellence

SUE ROSENZWEIG

It began in the mid '70s and is still going strong. Librarians serving young adults in Rhode Island have been meeting monthly at the Young Adult Round Table (affectionately referred to as YART) in order to keep up with issues affecting teens, to discuss resources (both print and nonprint), and to connect with each other. The meetings are open to all and are often attended by classroom teachers, representatives of local youth-serving agencies, youth advocates, students at GSLIS, and when possible, young adults.

YART is run totally by the participants, with administrative assistance from the Office of Library and Information Services, OLIS, (formerly DSLIS). Currently, Frank Iacono is our OLIS liaison and contact person for those seeking more information about YART or wishing to be added to the mailing list.

At an organizational meeting in May, participants brainstorm ideas for the next year's meetings, two of which will focus on current fiction, with the remaining topics chosen by group consensus. There is always a mix of book discussion meetings and "hot" topics; examples of the latter include serving gay and lesbian teens, religion and spirituality, AIDS, popular music, careers, and outlets for teen writing. On many occasions outside speakers are invited to make presentations on topics we want to learn more about. We often focus on a particular reference or nonfiction area (this year we chose sports and American history) and often revisit perennial topics of interest such as programming, magazines for teens, cultural diversity, fiction genres, and technology.

One or two people take responsibility for the meeting content – preparing a list of titles to be discussed, contacting a speaker, etc. Once the topics are decided on, we

choose meeting sites and meeting times. Meetings are alternatively set in morning or in late afternoon, to give both school and public librarians an opportunity to attend. Every month we meet at a different library in the state, including public, school, and special libraries. Occasionally we will meet at a museum. This is a great way to see all the libraries and other cultural institutions in the state (sometimes we get a tour too) and to get ideas to take back to our own sites. The host site is responsible for providing refreshments, an indispensable part of any meeting. Meeting notices with lists and directions are mailed out at least one month before each meeting, and the same information is posted on the YA special interest group (SIG) forum on LORI, Rhode Island's electronic bulletin board for librarians. Write-ups of each meeting are posted on LORI as well for those who are not able to attend.

For the past few years the March meeting of YART has been held at the RIEMA annual conference; this year the meeting will be held on March 21st at 9:15 a.m. at the Providence Marriott. The topic will be titles for reluctant readers and a group of teens will be attending the meeting to talk about their current favorites.

Librarians who serve teens usually work in isolation – YART provides a forum for librarians to exchange ideas, share and solve problems, learn about new resources, and connect with other community youth-serving agencies. Above all it provides an opportunity to meet and network with colleagues on a regular basis which can only improve our work with kids, which is what we're all about.

— *Sue Rosenzweig is a consultant specializing in young adult library service and an adjunct faculty member at the URI GSLIS*

Are You Connected?

Thanks to RILA members Michael Silvia and Debbie Mongeau, the Rhode Island Library Association now has at its disposal RILA-L, the listserv for RILA members and others interested in our Association. So take advantage of the opportunity to have up-to-the-minute access to RILA information and to share your knowledge and viewpoints. RILA will be stronger for it. Subscribe today!

How to Subscribe:

Send an e-mail message to: LISTSERV@URIACC.URI.EDU

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Type message as follows: **Subscribe RILA-L Your Name**

What Happens Next:

You will receive an e-mail message welcoming you to the listserv and giving you all the information you'll need to use RILA-L effectively. Print and save this message for future reference.

And don't forget to visit the RILA Home Page at:

<http://www.library.uri.edu/RILA/rila.html>

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