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Rhode Island Library Association

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Winter 1999

## Bulletin of the Rhode Island Library Association v. 72, no. 1-3

RILA

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# RHODE ISLAND Library Association *Bulletin*

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Winter 1999

## **President's Message**

KATHY ELLEN BULLARD

Having just recently read a charming essay by Tracy O'Shaughnessy, in the latest *New England Libraries* newsletter, on her thoughts prompted by a visit to her hometown library, I began to ponder my own hometown library. When I grew up in Westfield, Massachusetts, it was a mere town of 14,000 and the Westfield Athenaeum was a very fine library. It provided quiet solace, enlightenment, and a virtually limitless world of possibilities. I always felt as if the librarians and I were secret co-conspirators in my noble quest to discover Life, with a capital "L", through reading. I feel sure that many librarians entered librarianship because of that common experience of finding in their public libraries a place of wonderment, and, dare I say it, a place of books (not that Westfield's outstanding classical LP collection was not equally appreciated). From our personal histories sprouted a passion for the public library mission, for we knew intimately how important it could be in one's life.

Lately, I often find myself pondering what public libraries will be in the year 2020 and beyond, when my great grandchildren could be using them. As part of RILA's efforts towards that future, a donation of \$250 has been made to the American Library

*continued on page 6*

## **A Conversation With Michael Havener**

*W. Michael Havener recently settled in as the new Director of the URI Graduate School of Library and Information Studies (GSLIS). He comes to RI with ten years experience at the University of Oklahoma School of Library and Information Studies, including two years as Assistant Director. He also directed the Library & Information Research Center, a research and development office, while at Oklahoma. He graciously accepted our invitation to be interviewed for the RILA Bulletin and met with Managing Editor, Frank Iacono, in early January.*

**FI:** My first question had to do with library education in general. How would you describe the current state of library education and what's your reaction to great concern of many in our profession about the elimination of the "L" [Library] word from the titles of various schools offering graduate programs in library education?

**MH:** In today's environment information provision, which has always been a central function of libraries, is becoming more important than it ever has been. That's a truism. And whatever they're called, library schools have, in almost all cases, responded by providing a wider range of opportunities for working with information beyond the traditional library settings. At the same time, most programs are very committed to the traditional library settings although they may be using new tools and technologies as are the libraries and librarians out in the field.

**FI:** So the "L" word is safe at the GSLIS?

**MH:** Very definitely. We certainly have no plans to remove the "L" word from our title and, in fact, I'm very deeply committed to the "L" word and want it to remain. What you will find happening is that we will be adding additional courses and interdisciplinary programs applying information to other applications beyond the traditional.

**FI:** How do you feel about the Congress

on Professional Education being convened by ALA this Spring?

**MH:** It is very important for ALA to be concerned about library education. At the same time I think that library education is in much better condition than what some of the people expressing concern seem to believe. However, I do think it's very appropriate for ALA to make suggestions and to look at ways it can work with the schools to improve library education.

**FI:** Do you think much will come out of the Congress?

**MH:** Rather than any sudden shifts created by the Congress, I think we'll continue to see the gradual evolutions that we've seen the last few years in library education.

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FI: Moving from global to local, what attracted you to your new post at the GSLIS?

MH: I was really excited about the opportunities here. I like the people in the school and in the university. And I was impressed by the quality of the students in the program and by the support which the library community within Rhode Island and, in fact New England, has provided the school. It's very important to me to have a close relationship between practitioners and those of us who are providing library and information studies education for future practitioners. GSLIS is currently working closely with the URI Library, and the School's new Information Technology Instruction Lab is physically located within the library building.

FI: Now that you've more or less settled in, what's on your immediate agenda?

MH: Well one thing on our immediate agenda is the regularly scheduled re-accreditation visit by ALA. We will be visited by the Committee on Accreditation team in the Spring of next year, so I've been deeply involved in preparing for that visit, which actually gives us an opportunity to look at what we'd like to be doing and to include the wider library community in doing that. We also need increased faculty and, in fact, we have been given authorization for a new faculty position. So I've been very involved in beginning the search for a new faculty member with expertise in the areas of school library media services and information technology.

FI: Do you have an overall vision for the kind of program you'd like to have at URI?

MH: GSLIS will build on its strengths in the areas of youth services and school library media programs, but we will also continue to offer a wide program that prepares practitioners for any type of work they want to go into. The school will continue to be actively involved with the library community in the state and New England and I would like to see us expand our distance education activities so that we offer more courses to other parts of New England.

FI: I know you have a background in distance education. What kinds of things, more specifically, might URI do

with regard to distance education.

MH: Historically, the school has provided distance education either by having faculty members drive to other states to teach or by hiring practitioners within those states to teach specific courses. This will continue, but today we have the opportunity to make many more courses available through the use of technology. We're planning to reach students where they are located through technology like two-way television, web-based courses, and courses via e-mail. Already Cheryl McCarthy taught a course using two-way television last fall, and Gale Eaton has delivered courses via e-mail.

FI: What's the current enrollment at the GSLIS?

MH: We have a healthy, growing enrollment of over 200 students.

FI: And how active will you be as far as teaching is concerned?

MH: I'll be teaching one course each semester, starting with our government publications course this semester.

FI: Getting back to the curriculum, what changes can we expect to see?

MH: The curriculum at any school is constantly changing. We have a commitment to our traditional core skills and knowledge. But we will be adding courses to reflect the new tools that exist for librarians and information professionals to use. I see it more as an evolution of the courses we have and the addition of electives, rather than the abandonment of the traditional, which is still the bedrock of what we do.

FI: So the challenge for library schools is to remain relevant in the 21st century, by emphasizing information and technology while retaining the core elements that make librarianship what it is?

MH: As someone who teaches courses such as database searching and who worked as a practicing librarian in charge of database services in an academic library, I certainly know what technology can do to enhance services to our clients. However, I also believe very strongly that technology is a tool to accomplish and not something that replaces an intellectual structure and a commitment to service which has to be there.

FI: Diversity is a big issue now in our profession. What do you think of the

efforts of ALA and other associations and schools to recruit minorities to the library profession.

MH: I think the associations are making great strides but there's always more to be done. ALA's Spectrum Initiative is an exciting way of helping to fund minority students coming into the profession and I'm very proud that, of the first fifty Spectrum scholars, two are URI GSLIS students. And I want to see us work very hard to maintain our recruitment efforts.

FI: What, specifically, will the GSLIS be doing along these lines?

MH: We'll try a variety of approaches. Right now we're putting together a grant proposal that would fund special initiatives to bring in minority students.

FI: Lastly, and I know we've touched on this a little already, but what's your view of the role of the GSLIS in the overall library community?

MH: Well, there are really two roles. There's a role for individual faculty members, who have been and will continue to be very involved in RILA and other associations, using their particular expertise to serve. And I think that the school does have a special role as an entity, in areas like continuing education. We can't meet all the educational needs of practitioners, but I would like to see us expand our CE programming and also to work with other organizations within the state to see how we can combine our efforts to provide the best possible combination of offerings.

## DATES

**March 16:** Freedom of Information Day

**April 9:** RIEMA Annual Conference, Providence Marriott

**April 11-17:** National Library Week

**May 4:** National Library Legislative Day, Washington, DC

**June 3-4:** RILA Annual Conference, Roger Williams University

**June 25-30:** ALA Annual Conference, New Orleans, LA

## From the Committees...

### **Intellectual Freedom Committee:**

The American Library Association asks that libraries and librarians celebrate Freedom of Information Day, March 16, by sponsoring activities that raise awareness about the importance of government information and the "public's right to know."

On Nov. 23, 1998, Judge Leonie Brinkema for the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Virginia declared that the Internet policy imposed on Loudoun County libraries is invalid under the free speech provisions of the First Amendment. Under its "Policy on Internet Sexual Harassment," the Loudoun County library system had installed filtering software on the Internet access computers. The full text of the decision can be found at <[www.techlawjournal.com/courts/loudoun/81123op.htm](http://www.techlawjournal.com/courts/loudoun/81123op.htm)>. The Loudoun County library board has since adopted a new Internet use policy which allows adults to choose to have unfiltered access for themselves and their children.

The American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom website for its collection of state Internet filtering statements is: <[www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/int\\_inf.html#iupfs](http://www.ala.org/alaorg/oif/int_inf.html#iupfs)>.

The fourth edition of the *Intellectual Freedom Handbook* is in the process of being printed and distributed.

The Committee's session at the RILA annual conference will review intellectual freedom issues, legislation, and events in the past year. Committee members will be on hand to answer questions and discuss the new *Handbook*.

### **Legislative Action Committee:**

RILA's 1999 legislative agenda focuses on three major funding objectives:

- Ensure customer responsive library service by achieving the 25% level of state funding for public libraries.
- Support of resource sharing and network development by securing funding for state wide licensing of databases for all academic, school and public libraries.
- Promote adequate library facilities through increased funding for the

state construction reimbursement program.

Strategies for support of these initiatives are being planned and will include the distribution of an LTV video to libraries, that can serve as a focal point in local lobbying efforts.

## **RILA Annual Conference Preview**

"What cheer, Netop!" Just as Roger Williams greeted his Indian friends, RILA Conference Committee members hope to welcome all of our colleagues and friends to the 1999 Annual Conference on Thursday, June 3 and Friday, June 4, at Roger Williams University in Bristol, RI. This new venue will offer another glorious setting on Mount Hope Bay, with plenty of room space, and classy overnight suite accommodations for any long distance travelers.

One of the highlights of this year's conference will be the Thursday night dinner speaker, novelist Ann Hood. Most librarians know of her Rhode Island connections, that she lives here and frequently uses Rhode Island as the setting for her novels. We are very excited about having a nationally-known author as our speaker and hope many of you can join us at the Thursday night dinner.

Once again the committee has made every effort to present a full range of programs, both practical and thought-provoking, that address the needs and concerns of our broad spectrum membership. On the practical side are programs such as: "Disaster Planning" with poignant insight from Boston Public Library staff who very recently dealt with an internal flood; "Book Repair II", a follow-up session to a very popular program held last year; and "Evaluating Donated Books", presenting tips on how to sort the treasure from the trash in your pile of donations.

Some thought-provoking programs that can appeal to anyone are: "The Personal Side of Making a Career Change", offers hindsight from several professionals who have moved in and out of the field of librarianship, with a focus on the internal decision-making

process; "Analyzing the SALT Survey", explores how the data compiled through this school report can be utilized to improve libraries; "An Introduction to Myers Briggs", shows how the concept of "type-ing" personalities works in the Myers Briggs model.

Other programs are just as exciting and interesting, among them, a presentation on children's book reviewing by staff from the Horn Book magazine, an audience participation session on bringing the classics (even Shakespeare) to life with presenter Laurie Heineman, an award-winning actress, Y2K solutions for the procrastinators among us, an open discussion of intellectual freedom issues and concerns, new strategies for serving the disabled in our libraries, and advice on establishing core collections in the subject areas of gay and lesbian fiction, and science fiction.

Watch for a full schedule and descriptions of programs in our annual brochure coming to you soon in the mail, at your library, and posted on the web. We encourage everyone to come, enjoy the setting, learn from the programs, meet and talk with Hood, do some socializing, and re-invigorate your professional lives. Please register early!

## **COLA Annual Meeting**

The Coalition of Library Advocates held their annual meeting in conjunction with "Libraries on the Hill" day at the State House on February 10th. Governor Lincoln Almond was on hand once again to welcome those gathered and was surprised to learn that he was chosen to receive COLA's "Sweetheart of the Year" award for his Executive Order reauthorizing funding for the State's public library construction program. Beth Sousa, outgoing COLA Chair presented the award to the Governor, who also received a giant valentine from two youngsters on behalf of the family literacy center at the Providence Public Library.

Featured speaker was Leslie Burger, consultant for the RI Library Study (see accompanying article) who brought the group up to date on the study and offered a few hints as to what recommendations it may contain.

Additional COLA awards were also presented as follows:

The *William E. Reeves Friends Group Awards* went to The Friends of the North Kingstown Free Library (Fundraising Category) and The Friends of the Rochambeau Branch (PPL) Library (Programming Category).

The *William Bergeron Scholarship Award* was presented to URI GSLIS student Maggie Holmes and The *Linda Aldrich Scholarship Award* was presented to URI GSLIS student Elizabeth Torphy Middleton.

COLA also elected Co-Chairs Alan Axelrod and Alice Barrows to lead the organization for the upcoming year.

## **Statewide Library Study Update**

### **What is This Study All About?**

The Coalition of Library Advocates, on the 10th anniversary of the release of the *Rhode Island Study: Strategic Plan for Library Services* received a grant from the Rhode Island Office of Library and Information Services to support a new statewide study.

The study's goal is to create a new user-centered plan to guide Rhode Island libraries and ensure that RI citizens receive the most effective library service collections, and electronic resources. The plan is to determine specific strategies, including new and/or revised legislation, that will take the library community from where it is today to the new vision articulated in the plan.

### **Who's Conducting the Study?**

COLA contracted with Library Development Solutions, a consulting firm based in Princeton Junction, NJ. Leslie Burger has been working with COLA and the RI library community since September 1998.

### **What's Been Done So Far?: October Retreat**

In October 1999 the Library Board of Rhode Island held its annual retreat to focus on the statewide study. Representatives from Rhode Island's library organizations were invited to attend this one-day session to help identify areas to be addressed during the study. During the

retreat the group identified critical issues facing libraries in Rhode Island.

Retreat participants identified opportunities for the library community to work together to reach common solutions to benefit libraries of all types.

Ideas for potential legislation to address issues included: revising current legislation to reflect changes in the library and information environment; state support for electronic databases; adoption of standards for school and public libraries; and funding to support library human resource needs.

And finally, the group articulated the beginning of a new statewide vision for libraries that calls for a population that is continuously amazed by what the state's libraries have to offer, with libraries functioning as centers of community activity, staff functioning as information navigators to guide people through and increasingly complex information environment, and a virtual library that is readily available to all Rhode Islanders regardless of their physical location.

### **Focus Groups**

Ten focus group sessions were held during the Fall of 1998. The groups included library staff from all types of libraries as well as library users. Library groups discussed the type of challenges they face in their libraries and local and state needs with regard to technology, information resources, specialized expertise, marketing and public relations, legislation and advocacy, continuing education and training, multi-type library cooperation, collaboration, and standards and policies. Library users talked about the way libraries contribute to the state's quality of life and what they want from their libraries. Library users and library groups described their dream for the library in 2005. The results from these focus groups were compared to outcomes from the COLA Focus Group held earlier in the fall to determine common areas of agreement. Results from the focus groups will be on the OLIS web site in the next few weeks.

### **Interviews**

The COLA Committee also identified a number of individuals with perspectives that would be valuable in developing recommendations for the

plan. These individuals will be interviewed by the consultant to obtain insights about the Rhode Island library and information environment and discuss options for the plan.

### **What Happens Next?**

Library Development Solutions will be reviewing the results of the retreat and focus groups, site visits and interviews, with the COLA study committee to prepare a preliminary report with recommendations to guide library development over the next 3-5 years. Some preliminary recommendations were shared with the Study Committee in late January for discussion purposes.

The preliminary report, scheduled for release on March 5th, will be disseminated to the library community and will be discussed at three town meetings to be held on March 22 and 23. With the establishment of the library's community support for the plan, the report will be submitted to OLIS and the Library Board of RI and will form the basis of future budgets and Legislative programs.

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## **BULLETIN BOARD**

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The Greenville Public Library has received a \$62,530 grant from the Champlin Foundations to establish a homework center in the library's Baker Conference Room. The grant provides funding for computers, furniture, and other equipment. Volunteers and library staff will operate the homework center from 2 - 6 pm on weekdays. Several evening computer classes for adults will also be held there.

The Friends of the North Kingstown Free Library recently published *A Century of Books for All the Minds Journeys: Celebrating the Centennial of the North Kingstown Free Library*, an annotated list of books by American authors published from 1989 to 1997. The annotations were written North Kingstown trustees, friends, and staff and their selections cover fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and plays. *A Century of Books* can be purchased at the library for \$5 or

can be ordered by mail from the North Kingstown Free Library, 100 Boone Street, North Kingstown, RI 02852. Checks for \$7 (to cover postage) should be made out to The Friends of the North Kingstown Free Library.

“Reading Rocks!” is the theme for Teen Read Week, to be held October 17-23, 1999. This will be the second year of the observance, sponsored by the American Library Association (ALA) and the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA). National Teen Read Week partners include the American Association of School Administrators, America Booksellers Association, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Education Association and National Council of Teachers of English. A tipsheet for libraries with additional ideas and suggestions for promoting teen reading, as well as camera-ready art and sample press materials, will be available in the next few months. Watch the ALA Web site at <www.ala.org/teen-read/> for more information. Promotional materials with the “Reading

Rocks!” slogan will be featured in the ALA Graphics Spring Catalog. To request a catalog, call (800) 545-2433, ext. 5046. ALA graphics materials just for teens also can be found on the ALA Web site at <www.ala.org/market/graphics/teens.html>.

In 1998, some 478 challenges to library materials in public libraries, schools and school libraries were reported to the American Library Association (ALA). A challenge is defined as a formal, written complaint filed with the library or school regarding the presence and/or appropriateness of specific material. The number of complaints about specific books is down from a high of 762 in 1995. The number reflects only incidents reported to the ALA’s Office for Intellectual Freedom. Judith F. Krug, director of the office, notes that for each challenge reported, as many as four or five may remain unreported. Books dealing with issues of sex or sexuality continue to raise the most objections, followed by books challenged for being unsuited to age group and offensive language.

## PEOPLE

Holly Albanese is the new Director of the Hope Library in Scituate.

Elaine Ancekewicz was recently appointed Literacy Program Leader at Providence Public Library (PPL).

PAUL BAZIN is now Serials Librarian at Providence College.

Margaret Chatfield is the new Children’s Librarian at the Portsmouth PL.

Kimberly Deschamps recently was appointed Young Adult Librarian at the Woonsocket-Harris PL.

Nancy Gaiewski is the new Children’s Services Librarian at Cranston’s William Hall Branch Library.

Adrienne Gallo has been appointed Youth Service Librarian at the Cranston Public Library. Along with other CPL staff, she will be developing a new focus of service to teens.

Linda Gamble is the new Children’s/YA Librarian at South Kingstown’s Peacedale Library.

Judeanne Hamidzada is now Children’s Librarian at the Rochambeau Branch (PPL) Library.

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Cheryl Helms recently was appointed Director of the Redwood Library & Athenaeum.

Bonnie Lilienthal is now Children's Librarian at Providence Public Library.

Maureen McGuirl recently was named Children's Librarian at the Jamestown Philomenian Library.

Carolyn Magnus is the new Young Adult Services Librarian at the Portsmouth PL

Susan Millard has been named Librarian at the Willett Free Library in Saundertown.

Pamela Rakowski is a part-time cataloger at PPL, working on retrospective conversion of the RI Collection.

Barbara Weaver, Chief Information Officer at the Office of Library and Information Services, was the recipient of the 1998 Bessis B. Moore Award presented by the White House Conference on Library and Information Services Task Force "in recognition of commitment and special support for the betterment of libraries and the improvement of library and information services and/or dedicated services to WHCLIST"

## PUBLIC LIBRARY PROFILES

### *The Foster Public Library*

BY JENNY LAPERRIERE

The history of the Foster Public Library is not of one library, but of many, organizing, dissolving and merging. In 1781 the Town of Foster was incorporated and named for Theodore Foster, a U.S. Senator from Rhode Island. He presented the town with a gift of books from his library. This collection of books then became the first "public library" in Rhode Island. Foster

*The Foster Public Library*



PHOTO: JOSEPH MCGOVERN

"presented the Town with a Library which was the first free library in the modern sense of the word, in the State" (*The Providence Plantations for 250 Years* by Welcome A. Greene, 1886). In 1808 the General Assembly chartered the Foster Social Library Company. In 1847 it merged with the Foster Manton Library in order to raise matching funds offered by Providence businessman, Amasa Manton. The history is sketchy as to where the books resided during the early years. Private homes and the apothecary were most likely the "library."

Shortly after World War I, the Foster Memorial Library Association was organized. Although there was money given by the Old Home Days Association, there was no attempt to construct or acquire a building. The Foster Memorial Library Association incorporated in 1945. However, even with an official charter, the Association did not produce a library. In 1950, another group chartered the Foster Public Library Association. This group finally set up a small library on Danielson Pike. This library also served the Capt. Isaac Paine Elementary School, with a branch located at the school until 1964. Meanwhile, the Foster Memorial Library Association acquired the Foster Center School. In 1955 the Associations consolidated to bring together the library that had books, but lacked space and the library that had a building, but lacked books. The Foster Center School was remodeled and dedicated as a library in 1957 "in honor of the people from Foster who have served their country in times of war" (plaque on building). The library has continued to grow with additions completed in 1964 and 1970.

Geography has its benefits. Foster Public Library is located in Foster Center, which is in fact almost the geographic center of Foster. Consequently, Foster Public Library has twice the circulation and visitors than the town's other library, the Tyler Free. However, both libraries serve as community centers and attract patrons for daily chitchat and special events.

*Jenny Lapperriere is Librarian at both Foster PL and the Tyler Free Library in Foster, RI.*

## President's Message

*continued from page 1*

Association's Spectrum Scholarship Fund. That program is to help encourage minority applicants to enter graduate library schools. Encouraging diversity in our ranks will help us to ultimately provide the best service we can. And any program which helps any motivated person to enter librarianship is one we must support. RILA also felt that a corresponding donation to URI/GSLIS was appropriate, for not only should we support national efforts, we must support our local program from which so many future RI librarians will come. But as I ponder 2020, I'll admit it, I'm a bit worried. When I hear of library schools dropping the word "library" from their names, how can I not be? When journals report a dearth of children's librarians, how can I not worry?

But when new librarians, such as Chris Wallace or Bryan Strniste here in Woonsocket, happen along, I feel gratified, not just for being able to attract outstanding people, but for the entire profession. Here are two extremely competent librarians, at the beginning of their careers, who are genuinely committed to public service. And as is required today, they are technology literate and they enjoy using new technologies. But they understand that theirs is a "people" job, with the resources existing in order to provide service. And if there are outstanding young librarians here, I know they must exist in many other places as well. With the commitment of ALA, RILA, and other Chapters, and individuals, we can continue to attract quality people to our profession. And I can rest assured that my great grandchildren will find the public library experience as meaningful as did I.

## **A Sad Ending in Philadelphia**

*continued from back page*

**E-Rate:** A resolution encouraging all recipients to express appreciation to Congress and the agencies involved in the administration of the program passed with ease. The resolution also urged that ALA continue to work to improve the E-rate program including the application process and urged all eligible schools and libraries to apply for the second year of E-rate discounts. ALA's Committee on Legislation reported that "the long-term potential of this program is unprecedented and is of great value for libraries" and was grateful for Council's support.

**Outsourcing:** The Outsourcing Task Force final report and the issues it raised was the subject of a close to three hour "informal discussion" at Council II. The discussion was impassioned and wide-ranging, but seemly and civilized, which is not always the case when a "hot" issue presents itself. While some agreed with one councilor's characterization of the report as too general, too speculative, and too anecdotal, others agreed with another councilor's description of the report as "a remarkable consensus document." As the report points out, outsourcing has been around for a long time in the library world and will continue to have its place. The same cannot be said for privatization and the report clearly emphasizes the point. The report was presented as background information underscoring six motions put forth by the Task Force for Council's approval. Three were approved including Motion #4, which asked that ALA to commission a formal study on the impact of outsourcing and privatization on library services and management pending a report by the Budget Analysis and Review Committee on the fiscal implications of such a study. I will gladly supply copies of the report to anyone who wants one.

**A Reinvented Annual Conference:** ALA's Conference Committee solicited reactions and comments on its report, "Annual Conference: Options for the Future" at two information sessions and at various committee meetings where NELA's erstwhile Conference Coordinator, Mary Ann Rupert, who also chairs

the ALA Conference Committee, presented the report and listened to what people had to say about it. Essentially, the report notes "that many members find Annual Conference confusing, difficult to navigate, physically wearing" and lacking a programmatic focus. With this in mind the Committee's report puts forth a number of proposals, two of which are to "focus most programming in thematic "tracks" and "schedule programs within a track in the same hotel (or nearby hotels)." All of the proposals are discussed in detail in the report (once again I contact me if you want a copy) and the Committee indeed received numerous comments (pro and con) and questions. When all was said and done, most folks were of the opinion that the idea of a reinvented conference was worth pursuing and supported the Committee's plan to bring its proposals to bear in some form or fashion at Annual Conference in 2001 in San Francisco. Council agreed and provided its endorsement as well.

**Congress on Professional Education:** The Congress will take place in Washington, DC on April 30 and May 1. Ken Haycock, director of the University of British Columbia School of Library, Archival, and Information Studies, chairs the steering committee overseeing the Congress and reported to Council and a host of other interested ALA groups on the work of the Committee to date. Check out the Congress on Professional Education web site at [www.ala.org/congress](http://www.ala.org/congress) for a copy of Ken's report and additional information including how to participate electronically. Ken was also the top vote getter in Council's election of two new ALA Executive Board members. And just in case you're ever asked, forty-four of the fifty-six school or college based ALA-accredited library education programs still have the "L" word in their names.

**The Boy Scouts:** Council passed by a wide margin a resolution that "urges the Boy Scouts of America to reconsider their policy of discrimination in the areas of sexual orientation and religious belief and demonstrate a commitment to human rights, inclusiveness, and mutual respect." ALA has had a long relationship with the BSA via a long standing practice

of providing bibliographies for the BSA manual. And, as the vote indicated, most felt that it about time that the Association, in conformance with its various policies addressing discrimination, take a stand on this issue.

**Treasurer's Report:** As usual ALA Treasurer and former DSLS Director Bruce Daniels gave a clear and comprehensive analysis of the financial state of the Association, which in a word is rosy. Bruce, however, struck a nerve when he noted that ALA in future years will need to find additional revenues to support ongoing programs and new initiatives and suggested that raising conference registration fees might be one way to do it. This caused a lot of consternation among councilors (and on the Council listserv since) who feel that the fees are already prohibitive for those new to the profession and those who are retired. This is an issue guaranteed not to be resolved any time soon.

**President's Report:** Ann Symons reported on what has been a whirlwind year so far. Among the many noteworthy items in her report was her announcement that she has invited a group of filtering software manufacturers to meet with her, and a group of librarians especially knowledgeable about filtering, in Chicago to have an in-depth discussion of filtering and possible options for libraries. Another major announcement is her Spectrum scholarship fund raiser set for New Orleans. With a goal of raising \$200,000 for the Spectrum fund, on Saturday night ALA will host N'awlins' own Neville Brothers - an event not to be missed. Check out the ALA President's home page at [www.ala.org/symons/](http://www.ala.org/symons/) for a complete run down on all of Ann's initiatives on behalf of ALA.

**TV-Turnoff Week:** A resolution calling for ALA to withdraw its support of the 5th Annual National TV-Turnoff Week (April 22-28) was passed based on the argument that this support conflicted with ALA's strong stand on intellectual freedom and denigrated the values of visual resources.

As always please call (222-5816) or e-mail ([frankio@lori.state.ri.us](mailto:frankio@lori.state.ri.us)) with any questions or concerns regarding ALA.



## ***A Sad Ending in Philadelphia: ALA Midwinter***

BY FRANK IACONO, ALA COUNCILOR

ALA's Midwinter Conference ended on a very sad note, as news of Marvin Scilken's passing somberly was announced to those arriving for the third meeting of ALA Council on Wednesday, February 3rd. Marvin, the "unabashed librarian" himself, was one of Council's most vocal and dedicated members, whose youthful passion for libraries and library users belied his age. He was an "institution" on Council, always re-elected by wide margins, never missing an opportunity to speak his piece. But his persistence was matched by compassion and good humor and that's what made him special. A mentor to many in the profession, Marvin will be greatly missed by all whose lives he touched. The fact that his death took place in Philadelphia is cruelly ironic, for it is where, four years ago, our own Liz Futas passed away at Midwinter. Of course it's not fair to what is an excellent conference city, but if ALA never visited Philadelphia again, that would be just fine for a lot of us who knew Liz and Marvin.

With Marvin's wife Polly's encouragement Council III proceeded. She bravely sat through an impromptu half-hour tribute to Marvin and graciously accepted the condolences of all. Then it was up to Council to carry on with the issues at hand. And at the end all concerned seemed pretty satisfied with what was accomplished.

Council operated for the first time with a consent agenda and a timed agenda. The former worked to speed things up at least a little while the latter was problematic in that what were initially recognized as suggested discussion times by the body were seen as strict time limits by the parliamentarian. This limited debate in a few cases, which is not what the proponents of this method had in mind. This will definitely ironed out before this summer's conference in New Orleans. Be that as it may, Council had some extremely important and interesting items on its plate. Among them:

"**Libraries: An American Value**": By wide margin Council endorsed this new ALA intellectual freedom statement, previously endorsed by RILA and numerous other ALA units and state associations. This statement will be featured prominently in an *Intellectual Freedom Tool Kit* being prepared by the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee.

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