

Summer 1999

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RILA

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RHODE ISLAND Library Association *Bulletin*

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Summer 1999

President's Message

HELENA RODRIGUES

The First 30 Days

My presidency began with a bang, quite a few bangs, really, from the fireworks of the Bristol July 4th festivities. This year RILA was invited to march in the annual parade and to carry the flags of Rhode Island's 39 cities and towns.

With the assistance and support from two very dedicated RILA members, De Johnson and Carol Drought, we accomplished a feat that was a first for RILA – our organization had never participated before and a first for the Bristol Parade – the 39 flags had never been carried until this year.

On the morning of July 5th, the team was ready. Attired in white shirts and navy pants, decorated with glitzy garland, and topped with red, white and blue boaters, we were prepared to face the roadside throngs and the 2.5 miles of melting asphalt in the 100° heat.

Last-minute adjustments to the horizontal flag poles had to be made to compensate for a much smaller number of marchers than anticipated. We managed, but we proceeded without our water bearers and snack carriers who were recruited as marchers at the last

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Children's Library Services in Rhode Island: A 1998 Snapshot

BY MELODY LLOYD ALLEN

Which libraries have a policy for unattended children? How many libraries in the state require registration for story times for toddlers? Who has puppets that circulate? Do many children's librarians use the Internet to answer reference questions? In the fall of 1998, the Office of Library and Information Services conducted a survey of public libraries in the state to gain a snapshot of children's library services. This was not meant to be a scientific collection of data, but to help answer questions like those above. There was plenty of space for comments and qualifications to responses.

Members of the Children's Services Advisory Council assisted in designing the 11-page survey which included sections on staffing, professional development, facilities, policies, technology, materials, programming, reference and reader's advisory, and cooperation. The survey was distributed to each RHILINET main library and branch (except for two). 63 of 68 libraries responded. Keep in mind that throughout this summary the term "libraries" refers to library buildings as distinguished from library systems. Also, only a selection of the information collected is reported here.

Who's Staffing Children's Services?

43 out of 63 libraries have a children's services librarian with the professional degree, an MLS. That's 68%. 40 of the 63 libraries indicated that the children's department was staffed all the hours the library is open, yet some of this coverage is from the circulation/adult departments, not specialists in children's services. Only 15 libraries indicated that there was a young adult librarian, and many of these individuals serve young adults on a part-time basis.

Use of Technology

Almost all of the children's services librarians (89%) are registered on LORI PRO, the state's electronic

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network, and 73% log on at least once a week. Fewer, 35%, belong to one or two listservs. The most common are RILA and/or PUBYAC. Just three librarians belong to more than two job-related listservs.

44 of the libraries have web pages, with eight libraries mentioning that one was on the way, but only 25 of those indicated that they have a kids page. Computer training for kids and for parents is offered in about half the libraries.

All responding library systems, except one, are members of CLAN, the statewide database of public library holdings, but only 33 offer access in the children's department. Of course, some smaller libraries have only a children's area, and CLAN terminals are in a central location. Just 9 libraries use the KidsCat interface for Dynix. On a list of computer products/services, other dips in what is available are Internet access without graphics (LYNX), e-mail for library users, and chat. E-mail and chat are offered more often in the adult department. This pattern continues with the Web, magazine databases, encyclopedias, and other CDs. Typically word processing is offered twice as often in the adult department than in children's, whereas games are offered by only a third of the libraries, but are the one exception in that they are equally on computers in the adult and children's departments. Most libraries do not restrict children from using the computers in the adult department.

If computers are generally available for kids' use in both the adult and children's departments with a variety of software and services, how open is the access to the Internet? 36 libraries representing 17 systems require a parental signature for Internet use. It is worth observing that some libraries require that a parent accompany a child

using a computer up to a certain age, such as 7 or 10. Also, there are some libraries that consider the parental signature required to get a library card sufficient to cover all services.

38 libraries limit children's use of the Internet in some way. Only five library systems use filtering software, with four of those choosing Cyber Patrol. Two of these systems filter all computers in both the adult and children's departments (one library keeps one unfiltered computer). The other three filter only the computers in the children's department. On the other hand, 29 libraries have an acceptable use policy, some of which prohibit e-mail and/or chat. Seven libraries try to limit use through physical placement of the computer, four through signs, and four through the staff watching over the child's shoulder. It is important to remember that 22 libraries responded that they do not limit use in any way and that some of the libraries counted above limit in multiple ways.

So how much are new technologies used in delivering traditional services? Just three library systems take story time registration by e-mail. While all the children's departments take reference questions over the phone, only five accept reference questions by e-mail. In answering reference questions, the daily use of the Internet is as follows:

no response	4
Internet not available	2
used rarely or not at all	15
used one to four times per day	25
used five to twenty/often/dozens	17

The median would be two times per day. Some librarians pointed out that they share a computer with the public as opposed to a heavy user of the Internet who can leave the Internet at the ready all day.

What's Happening Within the Library?

Continuing to look at reference services, very few library systems beyond Providence provide formal homework assistance. Providence Public Library offers homework assistance in most of its branches and primarily relies on volunteers from VIPS (Volunteers in Providence Schools).

As for story times, the availability relates to the ages included:

Under 2	25%
Toddlers	60%
3 - 5 year olds	97%
School age	43%

Only 4 libraries offer any story times in a language other than English, usually Spanish. Libraries that do not register and do not limit the number of participants are urban libraries that do not want to discourage walk-ins and small libraries that have not experienced overflow crowds. 90% of libraries do crafts at story times, but many indicate that crafts are done only for certain age groups (less likely for the little ones) or only "sometimes." Just 24% use videos (5 libraries mention showing filmstrips).

Virtually every public library in the state participates in the statewide Summer Reading Program. Almost a third (of libraries, fewer in terms of library systems) have a Summer Reading Program for young adults, a relatively new development in Rhode Island. Over half include preschoolers in a "read to me" component.

In order to borrow materials, a user needs a CLAN card, yet CLAN does not have a standard age at which a child can obtain a library card. Each library system sets its own requirements. Half of libraries allow a child to get a library card at any age. This represents a smaller number of systems as 20 of these 32 responses come from three library systems. It would seem that larger systems tend to be more flexible about the age at which a child can have a library card. Most of the other libraries require some

RILA'S NEW WEB URL

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

version of the child being able to print his/her full name and being in kindergarten or first grade. One allows card registration at 3 1/2 years, which at first seems unusual, but somewhat logically matches the age at which children in this library begin coming to story time. With the enormous growth in books for children three and younger and the latest in research into brain and early language development, one wonders about the reasoning behind the 5/6 years age requirement and the hurdle of printing the name. On a statewide level, this variation in age for a library card hinders campaigns to give a child's library card to new parents as part of the effort to encourage early reading aloud.

Cooperation beyond the Library Walls

The most frustration regarding cooperation with another agency to serve children came over working with schools, particularly to receive alerts about assignments. Two libraries have had success using e-mail for communication. 52 libraries are willing to place materials on a reserve shelf for teachers doing an assignment. Only 21 libraries (with about half that number representing Providence facilities) have special borrowing privileges for teachers. Usually this means an extended loan period ranging from 3 - 6 weeks and no fines for overdue materials. 51 will give tours of the library to school groups, and 57 give tours to scouts and other youth organizations.

Just under half of the libraries indicated that they have ongoing cooperative projects with the schools in their communities; 75% of the libraries provide story times for preschools and day cares at the library, while only 40% go to those facilities. Just over 40% will speak to parents groups; some of the others would if asked.

15% of the libraries described a formal relationship with a healthcare provider. Most of those mentioned were with hospitals, and information for parents of new babies was the most prevalent activity.

Throughout this section, comments made it apparent that many of these cooperative services are available if requested, but in many cases, that cooperation is usually initiated by the other agency or organization.

Use of the Survey

The results of this survey have been extremely helpful to OLIS in responding to questions from librarians. While some changes have occurred in the year since the survey, much of the information is relevant and provides a baseline for future comparisons for the whole or for subsections. Most importantly, librarians are able to use the information to learn from each other and to build further cooperative efforts.

Melody Lloyd Allen is a Library Program Specialist at the Office of Library and Information Services.

State Funding Goal of 25% Achieved

When legislation was approved in 1989 mandating the state to provide 25% of the funding for public libraries by the year 2000, it was recognized as a highly ambitious goal that had the potential to put Rhode Island close to the top of states in terms of financial commitment to public library service.

Over the last 10 years it was never certain the goal was achievable by the year 2000. Success was won in 1999 because of 10 years of positive image building by public libraries statewide, effective lobbying of the legislature, advocacy efforts by a broad range of library support organizations, David Panciera's strong voice at the statehouse and the effects of an improved economy.

All library supporters have a responsibility to thank their representatives for turning a desirable goal into a financial reality.

A first attempt at securing public funding for statewide licensing of data bases was not successful this year. It is

clear we need to sell this proposal with a better education job relating to the universal access and economic benefits of the proposal.

RILA'S legislative efforts perhaps have a message for the future, aim high, stay focused and build a broad base of support.

The legislative action committee is currently recruiting additional members. With the anticipation of new legislation being proposed as a result of the recent statewide study, this is an exciting time for you to consider joining us as we start planning for the year 2000. Please contact the committee co-chair, David Macksam, Cranston Public Library, 943-9080 ext 103, davidmm@seq.clan.lib.ri.us

RILA's Blue Ribbon Committee at Work

RILA's Blue Ribbon Committee (BRC), co-chaired by Carol DiPrete and David Macksam, has been hard at work devising strategies to implement the recommendations in *New Possibilities: Rhode Island Libraries for the Millennium*. This is being accomplished through five task forces that will report their findings to the Blue Ribbon Committee, which in turn will forward its recommendations to the Library Board of RI for approval. Though the study recommendations fall under four categories, the BRC decided that a fifth category and task force needed to be created for recommendation number four dealing with literacy. The categories/task forces, task force chairs, and study recommendations are as follows:

New [Technologies] Initiatives (Dick Olson, RIC):

1. Create a digital information environment for Rhode Island residents, students and businesses so everyone is assured access to a core set of information resources that will prepare them for the 21st century – an "electronic information tool-kit".

2. Enable Rhode Islanders to easily obtain library materials and information by creating a single database of library holdings through an interface that links all of Rhode Island's integrated library systems.
3. Provide library users with access to current technology by establishing a technology support and replenishment fund.

Community Literacy (Kathy Ellen Bullard, PPL):

4. Foster a love of reading and improve literacy through the establishment of an early literacy reading initiative.

Funding (Fran Farrell-Bergeron, West Warwick PL):

5. A. Provide Rhode Islanders with adequately funded public libraries by continuing efforts to increase, by the year 2000, the state grant-in-aid program to public libraries to represent 25% of local expenditures.
B. Revise the current grant-in-aid legislation to include a proviso that state grant-in aid funds will be used at the local level to support statewide policy initiatives identified by OLIS, Library Board of Rhode Island, and a Task Force from the Rhode Island Library Community.

DATES

September 25 - October 2:
Banned Books Week

October 17-23:
Teen Read Week

November 15-21:
National Children's Book Week

January 14-19:
ALA Midwinter Conference,
San Antonio

6. Increase awareness of libraries by initiating a statewide public awareness campaign to call attention to the value of the state's libraries and how they help improve the quality of life for Rhode Islanders.
7. Initiate a statewide referendum or public question for the next state election, which asks the state's voters to earmark funds to support library improvements.

Infrastructure (Alice Barrows, COLA):

8. Enable Rhode Islanders to obtain needed materials by increasing delivery services to meet demands for sharing of library resources, with the state paying 100% of the cost of this service.
9. Reconstitute RHILINET and incorporate its operations into LORI.
10. Provide funding to provide continued access to the specialized collections and services at the Providence Public Library.
11. Revise and adopt standards for school and public libraries.

Governance/Policy Setting and Planning (Michael Havener, URI GSLIS)

12. Provide the resources that will enable the Office of Library and Information Services and Library Board of Rhode Island to implement the recommendations in this study.

Copies of *New Possibilities* have been distributed and continue to be available from the OLIS Library (222-5768). The entire report is also available online at:

<www.ori.state.ri.us/libprograms/RI_Library_Study/finalreport.htm>.

To monitor the progress of the Blue Ribbon Committee, check the following web site:
<www.ori.state.ri.us/libprograms/RI_Library_Study/implementing_the_stu_dy_recommend.htm>



Using the Web for Reference

BY LORI DECESARE

A couple of years ago, I took on the responsibility of writing this column for the *RILA Bulletin*, and like anything else at first, there seemed to be an unlimited number of topics to be discussed. However, I have begun second-guessing my choices and my competency to write this column. I am not a Web expert or a LAN specialist. I am just a reference librarian who happens to love using the Web. What could I write about that others may find helpful? Am I even capable of doing such a thing?

My answer came when my colleagues – Susan Dunn and Cynthia Archambault – returned from presenting a program titled “The True Meaning of Ready Reference on the Web” at the RILA Conference this Spring. The session was a great hit, focusing on using useful searching techniques to locate informative sites and organizing some of these instrumental sites. We had assumed that most libraries had developed a system of bookmarks or favorites, but based on the response, many had not taken advantage of the capabilities within their particular web browsers.

I have begun to realize that maybe my amateurish recommendations are probably helpful to someone out there, so have decided to use this column as a means of communicating various web sites that I come across in the literature or on the job. I would also recommend that if you come across a useful site, don't hesitate to post it to the LORI Reference Services Discussion List <www.ori.state.ri.us/lpsigs> or email me (lorire@ori.state.ri.us).

Reading through the library literature, one finds numerous articles comparing the many search engines now available on the Web. One of my

personal favorites is Google <www.google.com>, created in 1998 by researchers from Stanford University. Its search analysis somehow seems to return exactly what you need. For example, when searching for a company's web page, the results almost always list the home page as the first hit, saving the searcher from having to wade through lots of "junk." As with any new search engine, be sure to read the help page (see More Google) for its searching capabilities. Let Google make you feel lucky!

The next site comes with a story. Just this week, a patron called because she remembered hearing about a housewarming blessing where one delivers bread, wine and salt so the house never goes hungry or thirsty. She wondered if we could identify the rest of it. After searching numerous printed sources, I turned to the web. But not even Google helped me this time. I was just about to give up, when I tried one of our ready reference bookmarks, the Fugitive Fact File <www.hennepin.lib.mn.us/pub/search/fff_public.html> a database of web sites that have answered many common and unique reference questions. A query of "housewarming" resulted in one result outlining the symbolic meaning of bread, wine and salt as told in the film, "It's a Wonderful Life." This site was definitely a "blessing."

Lori DeCesare is a Reference Librarian at the Warwick Public Library.

National Library Week 2000

Libraries across the country are invited to join in hosting a "Connect for Kids" Day on Saturday, April 8, to kick off National Library Week 2000 (April 9-15). The national event will highlight the variety of resources available to kids and their families at the library and in their community.

The American Library Association (ALA) will sponsor the day in cooperation with the Benton Founda-

tion, sponsor of a "Connect for Kids" Web site <www.connectforkids.org> and campaign to raise public awareness about how to make the world a better place for kids, starting at the library. Libraries will receive a poster/tip sheet in fall 1999 with ideas for developing "Connect for Kids" Day programs and publicity.

ALA will also join the National Endowment for the Arts, the Library of Congress Center for the Book and other organizations to sponsor "LIVE at the Library 2000," a year-long millennium celebration of the arts. Grants will be awarded to 500 libraries, representing every state, to develop partnerships and host programs during National Library Week and throughout the year with writers, actors, musicians and other artists. Applications for grant funds will be posted in fall 1999 on the ALA Web site at <www.ala.org/publicprograms>.

The theme for National Library Week will be "Read! Learn! Connect! @ the Library." U.S. libraries of all types are eligible to apply for a \$4,000 National Library Week Grant sponsored by the Grolier Publishing Company for the best library promotion tied to the goals and theme of National Library Week. The deadline for application is October 15, 1999. The winner will be notified in December. A grant application can be found on the ALA Web site at <www.ala.org/pio/grolierapp.html>.

A free tip sheet from ALA and the Library of Congress with ideas for National Library Week, the Bicentennial of the Library of Congress (April 24, 2000) and other promotional opportunities is available from the ALA Public Information Office, 50 East Huron St., Chicago, IL 60611. Telephone: 800-545-2433, ext. 5044/5041. E-mail: pio@ala.org. The tip sheet and updates can also be found the ALA Web site at <www.ala.org/events/promoevents/index.html>.

URI GSLIS Advisory Committee Appointments

The URI Graduate School of Library and Information Studies recently announced several new appointments to its Advisory Committee. They are:

Representative Melvoid Benson, House Deputy Majority Leader, House of Representatives, Rhode Island

Margaret Bierden, Library Media Specialist, Woonsocket

Arnold Hirshon, Executive Director, NELINET

Helena Rodrigues, Dean of University Libraries, Johnson & Wales University

Pamela Scott, Information Coordinator, Pfizer, Inc.

Barbara Weaver, Chief Information Officer, Office of Library and Information Services

Linda P. Wood, Hope Valley, RI

The new chair of the Advisory Committee is Anne Kirby of Nimbus Research.

RILA IFC Handbook Available

The fourth edition of RILA's *Intellectual Freedom Handbook* is now available.

The 58-page handbook was compiled and written by RILA's Intellectual Freedom Committee.

To order send a check for \$5 payable to RILA to:

Carla Weiss
Adams Library
Rhode Island College
600 Mt. Pleasant Ave.
Providence, Rhode Island, 02908

PUBLIC LIBRARY PROFILES

Clark Memorial Library

BY JOHANNA WOLKE

Like many towns in southern Rhode Island, Richmond is made-up of several small villages. The foundation of textile mills on local rivers gave rise to the establishment of mill villages. Carolina, the site of Clark Memorial Library, is one of these villages. The Library's history begins long before its move to Carolina in 1982.

Clark Memorial Library began in the later part of the 19th century in the mill village of Shannock, a town that straddles Richmond and Charlestown. The Library was originally housed in the stock house at Carmichael's Mill. It was to be a source of education and entertainment for the mill workers. The Library was eventually moved to the Shannock Community Memorial building. During this time it was known as the Shannock Free Library, later renamed the WCTU Library (Women's Christian Temperance Union). Later it became the Clark Memorial Library, named after four members of the Clark family who perished in the 1938 Hurricane. Harriet Clark, who died in the hurricane, had been librarian for 29 years. The library continued to be housed in the basement of the Community Memorial building until its move to Carolina. The population growth of

Clark Memorial Library



Photo By Joe McGovern

Richmond, poor facilities in Shannock and the desire for a more central location spurred the Board of Directors to look for funding and a new site for the Library. As is the case with many small libraries, intense fund raising and creative financing are the most effective way to accomplish a goal.

Land for the new building was donated, Farmers Home Administration supplied the mortgage and the blessed Champlin Foundations brought the new Clark Memorial Library to its site in Carolina.

The new building is nothing like its predecessor. The building is modern, light, airy, passive solar heated and roomy. The old mill workers would be amazed, so many books, audios, videos, computers, air conditioning, and things they could never have imagined. It's a beautiful building; patrons love the exposed wood, plants and brightness, to say nothing of the helpful staff!

Since 1982 the population of Richmond has grown and the Library is feeling the strain. The Children's Room is much too small, the Meeting Room is inadequate and the stacks are packed. The Board of Trustees has formed a Building Expansion Committee to deal with these problems. The Committee has a daunting task; with much hard work and generous funding they are confident they will be able to keep pace with rapid growth of Richmond.

Johanna Wolke is the Assistant Director of Clark Memorial Library.

BULLETIN BOARD

URI GSLIS graduates are cordially invited to subscribe to a new list which is open to all of the GSLIS community. This list will be a good way of maintaining and refreshing our associations. To subscribe, simply send the following message in the body of an email to list-serv@pete.uri.edu (no subject needed): SUBscribe urilisalum <your first and last name>.

Connections is a FREE electronic directory of New England Authors and Illustrators available for speaking engagements and school visits. The directory will be updated via e-mail three times a year: January, June and September. *Connections* is sponsored by the New England Chapter of the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, the international professional organization for writers and illustrators of children's literature. To subscribe to *Connections*, just send your e-mail address to nescbwi@aol.com (Put "Connections" in the subject line) and visit their website at <members.aol.com/nescbwi/index.html>.

PEOPLE

Becky Boragine is now Acting Director of the Lincoln PL.

Kathleen Boyd recently was appointed Director of the McKillop Library at Salve Regina University. She comes to Salve from Boston College where she was Associate University Librarian.

Naomi R. Caldwell has been appointed as a tenure-track Assistant Professor in the URI Graduate School of Library and Information Studies. She will begin in January 2000. She comes to URI from the Feinstein High School for Public Services in Providence.

Cynthia Edson recently was named Director of the Woonsocket-Harris PL. She formerly was Assistant Director of Winthrop (MA) PL.

Stephanie Edwards has been appointed Collection Services Librarian at the Roger Williams University School of Law.

Dorothy Frechette, Library Program Manager at the Office of Library & Information Services, recently was elected to the NELINET Board of Directors.

Nicole Dufresne has been appointed to a Reference Librarian position at Warwick Public Library

Christine Haserot is a new Children's Librarian at Warwick Public Library.

Bart Hollingsworth is the new Information Delivery Services Librarian at Brown University.

Pam Laurenzo recently resigned as Director at Clark Memorial Library and began a new job as Director of the Hills Memorial Library in Hudson, NH on Sept. 13.

Joan Ress Reeves has been elected co-chair of the Fund for America's Libraries. She joins former U.S. Senator Paul Simon to head the Fund's board of directors.

Susan Reynolds recently was appointed Head of Reference at Johnson and Wales University.

Joan Schaefer, Director of the Barrington Public Library, will retire in October.

George Scheck has been appointed

Acquisitions Librarian at the Naval War College.

Mark Shelton is the new Science Reference/Collection Development Librarian at Brown University.

Regina Slezak recently was appointed Director of the Newport PL. She is the former Director of the Fall River PL.

Elizabeth Tabor has been appointed Acquisitions Librarian at the Roger Williams University School of Law.

Kathryn Taylor, Director of the West-erly Public Library, is the new Chair of RILA's Public Relations Committee.

Cherine Whitney is now Instruction Librarian at Johnson and Wales University.

Linda Wood recently was named RILINK Director. RILINK is the web-based union catalog of Rhode Island school library materials.

Julie Zecher has been appointed Reference Librarian at the Naval War College.

President's Message

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minute. Thanks to some very kind parade watchers, we were offered cups of water and cool sprays from the many hoses available along the parade route.

I am very happy to report that RILA's 19 marchers survived the ordeal despite the heartbreak of High Street and none of us required emergency treatment (95 other marchers did). It was a tremendous success despite the fact that television viewers were denied a unique treat of our group because Cox Cable conducted an interview as we proudly marched by.

Will there be a repeat performance? Probably, but we definitely are thinking about decorating a float.

Sincere thanks to Beth Tengwall for providing the New Shoreham flag and to the following people who marched under the RILA banner: Carol Drought, Erin Drought, Georgia Drought, Robert Balliot, Karen Taylor, Carolyn Tarpey, De Johnson, Rolf Johnson, Judy Bell, Wendell Pols, Charles Otley, Jr., Steve Micke, Gina Vessella, Diane Hogan, Jim Giles, and Sarah Croome.

N'awlins News Notes ...

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- Access, and Education and Continuous Learning. Among the priorities for FY2000 are a national advertising campaign to raise awareness of library services; a one-year extension of the Spectrum Initiative, and funding for a Customer Services Director.
- * Two name changes : the American Library Trustees Association (ALTA) has become the Association of Library Trustees and Advocates and the Office for Library Personnel Resources (OLPR) is now the Office for Human Resource Development and Recruitment (HRDR);
 - * A report by the Intellectual Freedom Committee that it is in the process of creating "intellectual freedom tool kits" specifically designed for four groups: general library users, parents and children, staff librarians and teachers, and trustees;
 - * Council actions, including:
 - the defeat of a motion that no speaker be provided compensation

- of more than \$15,000 from Association funds (otherwise known as the Colin Powell resolution);
- the defeat of a motion that would create a "standing committee to deal with egregious violations of professional rights and responsibilities of librarians within libraries themselves (one of a series of motions, all defeated, related to the Sanford Berman/Hennepin County Library controversy);
 - approval of the revision the by-laws to read "the five round tables with the largest individual membership shall be entitled to one councilor each and the remaining round tables jointly shall be entitled to one councilor to be elected for a term of three years by the members of the respective round tables;
 - the defeat, once again, of a motion to limit the quorum to 100 for membership meetings (none took place due to a lack of a quorum);

- approval of a resolution calling for the President to appoint an experienced library professional to the post of Director for the Institute of Museum and Library Services; and,
- approval of the formation of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgendered Round Table.

Lastly, as I enter my last year as RILA's Chapter Councilor, I encourage anyone interested in succeeding me to contact Kathy Ellen Bullard, Chair of the Nominating Committee and make your wishes known. Or if you just want to ask a few questions about what is involved, I'd be more than happy to entertain any and all questions. And I just happen to have a brand new ALA Chapter Councilor Job Description, recently was drafted by several councilors from around the country, that you can have for your very own. Think about it.

N'awlins News Notes: ALA Annual 1999

BY FRANK P. IACONO, ALA COUNCILOR

The usual crowd of 20,000+ gathered in New Orleans for the Annual Conference of the American Library Association, which took place June 25-30. And seeing as they were not there for the weather (the usual brutal heat and humidity with a day of driving rain thrown in), once again it was apparent that, just like the Crescent City itself, the conference had something for everyone.

For controversy, there was the appearance of General Colin Powell, the featured speaker at Saturday's Opening General Session. While the majority of attendees had no problem with his being the speaker, there were some who opposed his selection because of his militarist background, his exorbitant fee (70K) or both. ALA picked up the first 20K of the General's fee and a vendor picked up the rest. A small cadre of protesters did picket the convention center prior to the speech.

For excitement, there was the Neville Brothers benefit concert which raised some \$125,000 for the Spectrum Initiative Fund, ALA's scholarship fund dedicated to the recruitment of minorities to the profession. Here it should be noted that, just prior to the conference, Barbara Tunstall, a URI GSLIS student from Providence, was named a 1999 scholarship recipient, becoming the third Rhode Islander to benefit from this program.

And for many like myself there were the usual meetings, meetings, meetings. Some items worth mentioning:

- * Sarah Ann Long, ALA President, unveiled some her plans for the upcoming year. Her theme is "Libraries Build Community;"
- * Ken Haycock, Chair of the Steering Committee for the Congress on Professional Education, presented the Committee's its final report. He was applauded for a job well done. By all accounts the Congress was a notable success and resulted in forty recommendations. These and the background papers on which they were based can be located at www.ala.org/congress;
- * Bruce Daniels, ALA Treasurer, unveiled a FY2000 budget with a ceiling of \$39,833,970 that continues the Association's efforts in ALA's five key action areas: Diversity, 21st Century Literacy, Intellectual Freedom, Equity of

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