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RHODE ISLAND Library Association *Bulletin*

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Spring/Summer 2002

President's Message

David Macksam

Libraries do a pretty good job of locating books and other materials by using computers. However, we still can't beam books through cyberspace from one library to another. (Thanks to Anne Parent for this analogy.)

With 500 stops a week, the state delivery service moves nearly 3 million items a year among 147 libraries, at a cost of 6 cents per item.

The existing courier service contract, administered by OLIS, will expire June 30th. Recognizing the need for additional stops, the reality of rising costs, and the lack of sufficient state or federal funding to support the service, legislation has been introduced in the general assembly to secure funding for the delivery service.

House Bill 7039 and Senate Bill 2523 will:

1. Provide stable funding to continue the delivery service.
2. Expand service to additional school libraries.

Continued on Page 8

RILA Conference 2002 Newport Public Library

Mix business with pleasure at this year's RILA Spring Conference being held at the newly renovated and expanded Newport Public Library, Thursday June 6 and Friday June 7. Enjoy the historic buildings in the neighborhood as you walk from the Bellevue Shopping Center parking lot down to the library in Aquidneck Park. Later stroll to the Redwood Library and Athenaeum on famous Bellevue Avenue for a guided tour of this unique library, the oldest lending library in America. With luncheon at La Forge Casino Restaurant overlooking the tennis lawns of the International Tennis Hall of Fame, this conference offers some tantalizing treats beyond the beauty and excitement of the City by the Sea.

As always, luncheon is included in the price of registration, and this year with generous donations of vendor/sponsors we are able to offer luncheon at La Forge both days, and President's Speakers both days. (Seating is limited, please register early.) Mystery writer Dennis Lehane joins us for lunch on Thursday, and author/illustrator Diane de Groat on Friday. (See articles elsewhere in

this Bulletin for more about these authors.) Island Books of Jamestown will have copies of both authors' books available for purchase and signing. The luncheon will be preceded by the RILA Awards on Thursday, and the Business Meeting on Friday.

Getting back to business, there is of course a full line-up of programs over the two days. On Thursday morning plan to decide between learning about *Emergency Preparedness in Libraries*, an explanation of the RI Committee for the Humanities project *The Rhode Island Dialogues*, or *Digitizing Your Library*.

Continued on Page 2

This Issue:

<i>President's Message</i>	1
<i>RILA Conference 2002</i>	1
<i>Conference Speakers</i>	2-3
<i>Annual Awards Criteria</i>	3
<i>Westerly P. L. Challenge</i>	4
<i>Interview with Barbara Weaver</i>	5
<i>ALA Midwinter Report</i>	7
<i>People</i>	7

RILA Conference

Continued from Page 1

Later there is the *tour of the Redwood, Managing Desktop Security* presented by Rick Payette, CLAN's Technology Coordinator, and more about the @Your Library campaign brought to the local level.

Chris Hansen, Senior National Staff Counsel for the ACLU will come to town from New York, to talk about *Libraries and the Law* with up-to-date news on CIPA and the USA Patriot Act. Mr. Hansen is an expert on civil liberties law and was lead counsel in the Supreme Court case, *Reno v. ACLU*.

And if you've heard about *Virtual Reference and 24/7* library services, and want to know more, you should consider attending Steve Coffman's program on Thursday afternoon. Coffman is VP for product development with LSSI of Maryland, whose presentation will demonstrate virtual reference software that works in real-time over the web.

Friday's line-up is no less impressive, as we offer programs on *Library Services to GLBTQ Teens, Enhancing and Managing Your Website*, for those who need to revise and recapture an audience for their website, and news from the *world of music formats*.

Librarians from the Mashantucket Pequot Museum and Research Center will share expertise on *evaluating Native American materials for children*, a librarian from Warwick Public Library with a penchant for family trees presents *Genealogical Resources Online*, and NELINET and NELA both

send representatives to our conference to inform us about *Ergonomics in our Libraries* and *Getting Started in Fundraising*.

The tour of Redwood will be repeated for our Friday attendees, as will the Managing Desktop Security program. After lunch find out about *Graphic Novels for collection development*, or attend the session on *Wireless Networks* as explained by a computer engineer from Atrion. If all this is not enough excitement for you, we are cooking up some fun stuff for both Thursday and Friday before you go home. There are rumors of a Contra dance lesson with Committee Chair Karen McGrath, a special door prize for those who stay all day, and "for the road refreshments."

Pat LaRose

Newport Public Library

Dennis Lehane, Luncheon Speaker. Thursday, June 6th.

When I first saw the classic science fiction film, *Alien*, I "watched" many of its more gruesome scenes with my eyes shut tight. The movie itself, however, was intriguing and despite the mayhem, I remained in the theater to the bitter end.

Reading Dennis Lehane is a similar experience. The Boston-area world that Lehane creates is a dark and violent place indeed, but his storytelling is so compelling, his writing so taut that his books are extremely hard to put down. Lehane takes you on a wild ride into the bowels of humanity, and doles out little in the way of hope to smooth the crooked roadways.

PI team Patrick Kenzie and Angie Gennaro are direct descendants of Sam Spade (Dashiell Hammett),

Spenser (Robert Parker) and Matthew Scudder (Lawrence Sanders). They follow the unwritten code of behavior all hardboiled detectives do, and while their personal lives are unstable (to say the least), their dogged determination, once on a case, always brings results, if not a happy ending.

Lehane's first novel, *A Drink Before the War* (Harcourt, 1994), won the Shamus Award (presented by the Private Eye Writers of America), for best first PI Novel. *Sacred* (Morrow, 1998), *Gone, Baby, Gone* (Morrow, 1999) and *Prayers for Rain* (Morrow, 2000) were also nominated for best PI Novel, in their respective years.

Mystic River, his latest crime novel (Morrow, 2001) is once again set in blue-collar Boston, (Lehane's real-life hometown) but Lehane leaves Patrick and Angie in their church belfry offices, and tries a different tack. The landscape, both geographical and personal, is just this side of depressing, but the violence seems to be softened, the characters more complex. The hallmark of Lehane's writing, flawed characters trapped in desperate situations, is still present, yet as one of his characters says, "Happiness comes in moments, and then it's gone until the next time."

With each successive novel, this writer seems to garner more praise. David Pitt in his *Booklist* review of *Mystic River* writes, "It's time to stop talking about Lehane as an up-and-coming genre star and acknowledge that he is one of our best fiction writers period."

Dennis Lehane will be the guest luncheon speaker on Thursday, June 6 at La Forge Casino Restaurant in Newport, RI.

Mattie Gustafson,

Newport Public Library,

Head of Collection Management

**Diane de Groat,
President's Speaker.
Friday, June 7th**

If you've read Lois Lowry's *Anastasia Krupnick* series, then you've seen Diane de Groat's work. Over the course of her career, which started in the early 1970s after her graduation from the prestigious Pratt Institute, Diane de Groat has illustrated nearly 100 children's books, including a growing number of her own.

Growing up in Newton, New Jersey, de Groat began taking art lessons at the age of seven. In high school she was awarded a scholarship to the Phoenix School of Design in NYC. Not long after her graduation from Pratt, she snagged a job as a book designer at Holt, Rinehart and Winston, and she was soon on track towards her eventual, very successful career as a freelance children's book illustrator.

Since her first assignment to illustrate Eleanor Clymer's *Luke Was There* (Holt, 1973), de Groat has added to her list of clients well-known authors Eve Bunting, Lois Lowry, Johanna Hurwitz and surprisingly, she even illustrated Dr. Ruth Westheimer's *Dr. Ruth Talks to Kids* (Simon and Schuster, 1993).

De Groat had an early success of her own in 1977 with *Alligator's Toothache* (Crown, 1977), and recently returned to writing as well as illustrating again in 1992 with the first of her "Annie Pitts" series. In these little chapter books, the main character is reminiscent of Anastasia, but a bit sillier, and her illustrations are appropriately more imagi-

Continued on Page 8

**RILA Seeking
Annual Award
Nominations**

The annual awards process provides the opportunity for special recognition of the accomplishments, service and commitment of trustees, librarians and others. The RILA Executive Board encourages you to nominate a deserving colleague for this year's awards.

This year's nominations are due by May 3, 2002. Nomination letters should be sent to Cindy Lunghofer, East Providence Public Library, 41 Grove Ave., East Providence, RI 02914. They may also be sent via email to [Cindy at book_n@yahoo.com](mailto:Cindy_at_book_n@yahoo.com).

Trustee of the Year Award:

- Any trustee of any library who has served on his/her board for at least three years is eligible for this award. These are suggestion guidelines, but by no means the only ones, upon which a nomination may be made:
- Nominee worked in a readily identifiable way to develop/improve library service to a community, or to a specific segment within the community.
- Nominee successfully lobbied for increased funding and/or resources for his/her library.
- Nominee fashioned a plan that successfully enhanced the library's role in the community. Nominee was instrumental in networking with trustees of other libraries to foster cooperative planning or activities.

Outstanding Librarian Award

This award honors the career accomplishments of a librarian who has demonstrated an outstanding record of service to both his/her library and to the library profession. The nominee must be a member of the Rhode Island Library Association. Guidelines for nomination include:

- Development of outstanding service in field(s) of expertise, e.g. children's, administrative, technical. Involvement in statewide library activities.
- Record of professional library leadership.
- Encouragement of community/institutional support for library.

Citation of Merit:

- This award is conferred upon citizens who are neither librarians nor library trustees who have made outstanding contributions to quality library service.
- This award may be given to an individual or group.

The RILA Executive Board will determine award recipients based on the letters of recommendation. The Board reserves the right not to present these awards in any given year.

 ★
 ★ **\$57,000 in LSTA Library** ★
 ★ **Literacy Grants will be** ★
 ★ **available for projects starting** ★
 ★ **July 1, 2002.** ★
 ★ **Details will be forthcoming** ★
 ★ **on the LORI web site.** ★
 ★ **<http://www.lori.state.ri.us>** ★
 ★



**Challenge at
the Westerly Public
Library**

If ever a Christian soldier did battle with the Westerly Public Library over intellectual freedom vs. subjecting children to Satanism, Helen Macauley is that holy crusader. Macauley, one of some 225 library incorporators, has vowed never to surrender.

She's been protesting for weeks a program dealing with tarot cards that was presented Thursday afternoon for kids of seventh-grade age and older.

Her call to arms? "This is a Christian community here. There's an Episcopal church across the street, a Congregational church, a Catholic church," she said. "Perhaps Judeo-Christian because there is a synagogue down the street. Tarot card reading is clearly against Christianity. It denies the existence of God. We cannot allow children to be injured. This is a Christian community."

She delivered that message to the library director, Kathryn Taylor, and to the library board president, Robert Driscoll. Several others sharing her anger arrived at the library Thursday morning to see Taylor. They were carrying Bibles. A priest at the largest Catholic church in town, Immaculate Conception, asked the library, in less strident tones, that the tarot program be called off.

"I called Kathryn at the library on Monday morning, and asked if she could please cancel that," said Father Ronald Bengford. "It's in the same area as horoscopes,

witchcraft, spells, palm reading. It goes against our faith, our teaching. It goes against the First Commandment." Last weekend, the priest asked parishioners not to attend the program.

The library went ahead with what was planned. Taylor, the director, had never encountered such an outcry in her career. "About 13 people signed up for the teen program," she said. "We had three pairs, two mothers and daughters and one mother and son, and random teens. It's good that we had some adults."

The tarot program was part of a series for young adults at the library. It was given by Jonette Paciotta of Warwick and promoted in the library's monthly calendar as "Tarot Cards for Teens. Can you see into your 2002 future the ancient way?"

The library's events calendar also had the words "Winter Solstice" on Dec. 21, where there was a portion of a Christmas star. Taylor said people complained about that as well.

"Some of the Christians in the community see tarot as a gateway to Satan and some say it's about false gods," said Taylor. "I'm not sure when tarot cards started to be seen as evil. I wonder what makes some divination processes, like the I Ching and daily horoscopes, all right, and tarot cards not?"

Tarot cards, initially used for a card game, are traced to Italy in the early 14th century. In the mid-18th century the cards became a popular tool for divination in Europe. Some of the card symbols emanate from the Kabala, a 12th century tradition of esoteric Jewish mysticism.

Beth deRose of Madison does tarot readings mostly for spiritual counseling. "I counsel people on prayer, on growth in life, career directions. With younger people, I

help them resolve issues with friends," she said. "There is a card with the devil on it. The meaning of that card, though, is not about the devil or evil but about thinking you're bound to something that you are not."

She's done readings for nuns. "It was always about their spiritual growth," said deRose.

Westerly has tangled with freedom of expression and allegations of Satanism before, most recently over the right of a high school student to wear a T-shirt with 666 on it. That number is associated with the devil in the Book of Revelations, argued those working to ban such logos.

Taylor, the library director, told Helen Macauley and others that a tarot program was in keeping with the selection policy that says, in part, "The library recognizes that there are ideas, opinions, viewpoints and philosophies which are subject to discussion and debate, and that any community will be made up of citizens with divergent viewpoints."

The library wants to be a forum for those divergent viewpoints, and, in this instance, happily, it absolutely was.

This is the opinion of columnist Steven Slosberg. His e-mail address is: s.slosberg@TheDay.com

 * **The ALA provides assistance** *
 * **to libraries facing actual and** *
 * **possible challenges to books,** *
 * **Internet access, magazines,** *
 * **and other library materials.** *
 * **Contact Beverley Becker at** *
 * **800-545-2433, ext. 4221, or** *
 * **bbecker@ala.org** *

Barbara Weaver Reflects

Deborah Barchi, Director of the Barrington Public Library, spoke with Barbara Weaver, recently retired as Rhode Island's Chief Information Officer.

DB: Can you trace the history of how you first got started in libraries?.

BW: I had been working for a technology company but for various reasons after my daughter was born I moved full-time to Thompson CT where my husband was operating a sports car race course. I would go to the Thompson Library whenever I could, but it was only open two days a week. I joined a budding Friends of the Library group, who decided to volunteer on Saturdays so the library could be open then. Some months later the librarian left, and the Board asked me and a friend if we would run the library as co-librarians.

At about this time, the person in charge of the CT State Library Willimantic Service Center urged me to enroll in the new library school at the University of Rhode Island. Once I got my MLS, the State Library offered me a job as a consultant. I stayed there a few years, and then went to Worcester as the Regional Administrator for the Central Mass. Regional Library System (where Anne Parent came from). From there I went to New Jersey as State Librarian, and then came to Rhode Island.

DB: Now tell me something surprising about yourself that we never learned about while you were in RI, Barbara. If nothing else, tell

me about the Thompson Raceway!

BW: The sports car race track was designed by my husband, and he and I ran it for 15 years. It was a sports car race road course and it was very successful, but then the sports car racing moved beyond the kind of private informal club racing that my husband was really pushing for so we went out of business.

I don't know how many people know



Barbara Weaver

that I had a pilot's license. One of the things that I used to say is that my husband was famous race car driver; my daughter was a champion at horse shows when she was a child, so I decided I had to find something that I could do that neither of them could do. So I got my pilot's license-- that was just before I went to NJ. The most exciting thing in one's life other than having one's first child is soloing in an airplane. It is an absolutely wonderful feeling to know there you are up there all by yourself and you're the one running the show.

DB: Going back to your work at DSLS and OLIS, Barbara, what would you say is the achievement you are most proud of?

BW: I think what I'm most proud of is that I kept it alive! When I came here Bruce Daniels had just left to go up to

Syracuse and Governor Sundlun said to me," I don't know whether I need to maintain a department of state library services but I need someone to be operating it while I make up my mind. Are you willing to come in on a 6 month temporary basis while I make up my mind?" and I said, "sure"; and he asked me to give him a report on the benefits or disadvantages of keeping a state library agency. At the end of 6 months I had given him a report, and I gave him all the legal reasons as well as the traditional reasons why he should keep it. And by then he and I had got along really well so he said, "OK, we'll keep it. Do you want to stay on and run it for a while?" And I said, Sure, why not?"

Then Governor Almond came in and he said, "I don't think I want to keep a state library agency", and I said, "Governor, why don't you take a look at the report I did a few years ago and see how you feel about it then. I made a proposal that a Chief Information Officer position be established and that OLIS be part of the Department of Administration. I think the major achievement was just keeping State Library Services alive, keeping it together, and keeping the library functions as a separate entity.

There are two major functions that state library agencies provide: one is the monitoring and keeping track of funding and grants but the other part is helping: library development such as support for continuing ed activities workshops, the regional library for the blind, library reference services and so forth.

But as the economy starts to go down the first things to go are the helping things. Everybody always

Continued on Page 6

Barbara Weaver

Continued from Page 5

keeps the monitoring stuff but they start to lose the helping things and certainly in RI that has been going on for more than 10 years. So that is what worries me most about the trends not only in RI but in other states: that people don't realize and the residents don't realize what they're not getting. If you don't get something you don't notice it until all of a sudden you need it and there's no place to get it from. It isn't enough to make a big fuss about, to say we've got to have this back or we've got to have enough people to do this because you don't realize you miss it and I think that's a big problem.

DB: In addition to those concerns, what do you think are the greatest challenges that face libraries across the country, but especially in RI?

BW: Something that has been talked about a lot is: who needs libraries anymore now that we can get all the info on the Internet? I think that certainly is a big issue and there are plenty of people on both sides of that. I think people who have always used libraries recognize that libraries and librarians can be helpful to them.

I think the other part that is very worrisome is the supply of librarians and supply of library workers. Some of the older librarians are still not comfortable with technology and afraid that they aren't going to get all the information they need online. The younger librarians who are coming out of library school are really hip with technology but what I've heard from a number of people about recent library school

graduates is that they are so interested in technology that they have lost a lot of the customer service approach that the older non-technology librarians have. So I think we need to try to get an amalgamation of those two approaches. We need to have people who really understand the technology and what can be done with it; but we really need to have people who understand what it is that people are looking for; how to ask the reference questions, and so forth. I see that as a big issue.

I think the other thing I'm still really convinced about is that there needs to be a much closer relationship between library people and technology people. I still think that it was a good idea that we did this 6 years ago here in RI. I'm talking about the CIO position and the fact that libraries and technology are in the same administrative unit. In public libraries that hasn't been such a big issue because the public libraries have been able to hire their technology people and have not had to negotiate too much with administrative offices in the towns but certainly in schools this has been a serious problem. The librarians' position in a school has traditionally been a female job and the technology position in the town has been a male job and they often do not talk to each other. This has been a serious problem in many schools for years.. Academic institutions have recognized more clearly the need to combine those 2 functions. And there are a number of academic institutions where the CIO is responsible for libraries and technology. I think it's really important to take place in state governments as well.

DB: If you were a mentor of a

library student or a recent graduate, what advice would you pass on to help them make the most of their career?

BW: They should really understand the uses of technology. Not the technology itself-- they don't need to know the ins and outs of technology any more than you need to know what makes your telephone work but they need to know what technology can do to make information accessible. I would recommend that a new librarian start to do as many things in a library as they possible can because the more variety you can have in your experience the better off you will be.

DB: Anything else you wanted to mention?

BW: What I really appreciate is the amount of support and activity there has been from DSLS and OLIS and the library community in general in the 10 years I have been here. There have been so many significant accomplishments: the 25 percent of the state aid to public libraries, the fact that the delivery system is going great guns, the amount of coop activity there is among libraries and individuals in libraries.

DB: My last question is what are you going to do next?

BW: Certainly one of the things I'm planning to do is a lot more traveling. I'll probably go to England in the spring and IFLA is in Edinburgh this summer. I'm feeling quite free at being able to decide when I'm going to travel. I did create my new business cards because I've already had a telephone call asking me to take on a consulting job and I said yes, as long as it is isn't one of those *temporary* six month jobs that ends up lasting for 10 years!

ALA Midwinter Report

The ALA Midwinter conference in New Orleans covered a lot of territory, ranging from statements about the networked world to resolutions about hotel contracts.

But clearly, the most excitement and "buzz" were generated by two major issues. The first was privacy and confidentiality. The Patriot Act was the topic of discussion at meetings, programs, and amongst librarians struggling with its repercussions. An excellent presentation provided much useful information about what to do when "there's a knock on your door". I urge everyone to check out www.ala.org/washoff/patriot.html for excellent flyers and FAQ sheet.

The major points seem to be these: Understand the difference between privacy rights and confidentiality, a method of achieving privacy. Have your library's policy clear and in writing. Be sure all staff understand the procedures to follow if a request for information is made. And make sure your library's legal counsel concurs that your policy is legal according to your own state's statutes. Then, if or when a knock on the door comes, you'll be as prepared as one can be.

In conjunction with this, the first draft of the Statement on Privacy and the ALA Bill of Rights, drafted by the OIF was presented. The discussion was interesting and pointed out the conflict between what's practiced in the "real" world and what our ideals might be. All chapters and individuals have been asked to comment on the statement. See the OIF site on the ALA site.

The second key issue discussed revolved around the association's filing for 501-C-6 status. This issue relates to the status of librarians and to pay equity, two key issues of President Elect Maurice "Mitch" Freeman's platform.

Originally, the 501-C-6 issue was raised because of the desire to institute a program of certification in a specialty, much the same way that certain doctors or other professionals are board certified. In order to raise funds for this and to award certification to individuals, ALA was required to be a different kind of nonprofit in addition to the traditional 501-C-3. However, at this conference, the motion to file for 501-C-6 revolved around the ability to advocate for better salaries, and improved status, in addition to the certification process.

Much discussion ensued by the Council with heated debates about the effectiveness, the cost, the timing, and other reasons why this was or was not the "right" time. But the motion prevailed. And ALA will move forward with filing for that category. President elect Freeman has worked and will be working with two committees, the Pay Equity committee and the Status of Librarianship committee. Those two committees have worked together and have drafted a comprehensive plan of action addressing their respective issues. The 501-C-6 will allow for some "heavy duty" advocacy revolving around that plan.

Certainly, some of us have been talking about these issues for many years and have been disappointed by past efforts. But with a crisis looming due to retirements and general inability to attract candidates to the profession, let's hope it can meet with some success. So stay tuned!

*Kathy Ellen Bullard
Providence Public Library*

People

Patty DeFrancesco left her position as Assistant Children's Librarian at the Greenville Public Library to raise her new baby.

Jody Day, enrolled in the graduate school of Library and Information Sciences at U.R.I., was appointed Assistant Children's Librarian at the Greenville Public Library.

Paula Dugan, formerly at Bellingham Public Library in MA, is the new Head of Children's Services at Newport Public Library.

Rhonda Hevenor recently assumed the position of part-time reference librarian at the Greenville Public Library.

Shirley Tyler, of the Newport Public Library has been appointed the new Head of Circulation.

Edna Wells, Newport Public Library. Recently retired after 33 years of service.

Bill Hogue, a student at the graduate school of Library and Information Sciences at U.R.I., is doing an internship in the reference department of the Greenville Public Library.

Ray Brennan was recently appointed Librarian for Computer Services, Reference, and YA Programming at the Cross Mills Public Library in Charlestown.

The Rhode Island library community sends their best wishes to **De Johnson** for a speedy recovery from her recent surgery.

