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NEWSLETTER OF THE MICHIGAN HEALTH SCIENCES LIBRARIES ASSOCIATION

President's Message: Threats to Academic Libraries

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In my last President's Message, I discussed the dangers facing hospital libraries and the need for support for them through standards and accrediting agencies such as the Joint Council on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO). Now, I'm going to discuss the threats to research libraries. Certainly, research libraries are not threatened in the same way as hospital libraries. Academic accrediting bodies do support research libraries and no university administrator would seriously suggest that the library be eliminated as a cost saving measure. Although research libraries aren't endangered, they are unsustainable. Research libraries traditionally pursue a very noble and, now, completely impossible mission: to preserve and share the written record of scholarship, the cultural and intellectual history of our civilization, in support of research conducted by faculty members and doctoral students at Ph.D. granting institutions.



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In 1992, the Mellon Foundation study *University Libraries and Scholarly Communication* concluded, "The rapidly rising prices of materials, the continued increase in the number of items available for purchase, the fact that university libraries seem to be acquiring a declining share of the world's output, the impracticality of continuing to build large, costly warehouse-type structures to shelve printed materials, thus replicating collections that exist elsewhere—these and other developments cause one to ask whether established practices, which are already eroding, can be continued for much longer." (Cummings, Witte, Bowen, Lazurus, & Ekman, 1992)

We are all very familiar with the problems of rapidly rising journal prices. But rising prices aren't the only issue for research libraries that are attempting to collect thoroughly in areas important to their institutions. Note that I said thoroughly, not comprehensively. To a research librarian, comprehensiveness means collecting everything on a topic, including manuscripts, in all available languages and formats. This is something that most research libraries used to have as a goal in areas where they are nationally recognized. (See <http://www.columbia.edu/cu/lweb/services/colldev/collection-depth.html> for more information on collection depth indicators as defined by research libraries.) The growth in the amount of information available is also a huge problem. I am talking about the growth in published information, not just the material available on the Web. Research libraries were not able to keep up with published output even when budgets were good for higher education. In a study of 24 prominent ARL libraries, between 1970 and 1982, the number of books added increased at a rate of 1.4% per year while the number of titles published increased by more than

2% per year (Cummings, et al., 1992). The 1992 Mellon study also tracked the enormous growth in the number of serials published noting, "more than half of the titles currently available were first published during the last two decades." Hawkins estimated that in 2001, when taking into account both inflation and the increase in the number of titles available, that research libraries archived one-tenth of 1% of available information. This diminished purchasing power means that research libraries now collect only the necessary core titles in many disciplines, leading to more homogenous collections across the country (Hawkins, 1998).

While research libraries can no longer accomplish the mission of preserving the entire scholarly record, many volumes are still added to collections each year, exacerbating existing space problems. In the electronic age, justifying additional space to administration is as difficult for a research library as it is for a hospital library. The cost of building a space to house a volume costs approximately \$20. Once the space has been built, it costs about \$1 per year per volume for maintenance of the space, including heat and electricity. My institution contains approximately 4.7 million volumes. We have needed more space for quite a while, a situation only mitigated by increased installation of compact shelving units. Hawkins concludes, "If we proceed with the library model as we have known it, the costs associated with storing and archiving the information will bankrupt our institutions of higher education." In the electronic age, there is little support, and no money, for erecting expensive new buildings to house the relics of a bygone era. The future of library space is in public services, not collections. Librarians and academic administrators have spent the past decade envisioning an electronic future,

acknowledging that there is a paucity of scholarly information currently available electronically, and not having any coherent plan for how to make the electronic research library a reality. Larry Page and Sergey Brin -- the Google guys-- have a plan to address part of the problem, the only realistic one that's on the table. The Google Print project will go a long way toward preserving and making available material in the public domain. What concerns me about this solution is that, in large measure, the solution came from outside the library world. Are librarians bold and innovative enough to find solutions to our own problems, to do something other than talk about them? This is a question relevant to everyone in this organization, no matter what type of institution we work for.

Cummings, A.M., Witte, M.L., Bowen, W.G., Lazurus, L.O., & Ekman, R.H. (1992). University Libraries and Scholarly Communication. Retrieved May 30, 2006, from <http://www.arl.org/scomm/mellon>.

Hawkins, B. (1998). The Mirage of Continuity: Reconfiguring Academic Information Resources for the 21st Century. Washington, D.C.: Council on Library and Information Resources and Association of American Universities.

You're Invited to "MHSLA State University: A Capital Conference"

*By Patricia W. Martin
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What could be more inviting the spending a few crisp Fall days on the campus of a Big Ten University? Think of it – colorful fall foliage, sounds of the band filling the late afternoon air, opportunities to attend excellent courses, networking with colleagues, and special events you won't forget. All of this is available to those who attend MHSLA State University!



2006 Local Arrangements Committee (L-R): Jaime Friel Blanck, Patricia Martin (2006 Conference Chair), Marilia Antunez, Michael Simmons (LAC Chair), Arlene Weismantel, Susan Kendall, Sheila Bryant, John Coffey, (not pictured Leslie Behm)

This year's MHSLA Education Conference will offer three Continuing Education Classes. Dr. David Slawson will offer a Wednesday class, "The Librarian's Role in Information Mastery", for eight credits. He is one of the creators of the Information Mastery paradigm used for teaching the application of best evidence to clinical practice. You can read about this at: http://www.healthsystem.virginia.edu/internet/familymed/docs/info_mastery.cfm.

The other Wednesday CE, "Conflict Management," is an eight credit class taught by Deb Nelson Dunbar. Debra has been working with universities, companies, health care institutions and financial institutions for the last 14 years, conducting training and consulting on a variety of organizational issues. She is a University Consultant for Employee and Organizational Development within University Human Resource Services at Indiana University and is responsible for providing training and consulting for seven Indiana University campuses.

Our third CE will be offered on Friday. Our very own Lynda Baker will be teaching a four credit hour class on Evaluating Research Articles. Lynda is an Associate Professor in the Library and Information Science Program at Wayne State University. If you missed her class last summer for the Metropolitan Detroit Medical Library Group, this is your chance to correct that oversight!

Seriously, this conference offers a great deal to the membership. It will be held on the campus of Michigan State University at the Kellogg Center. An institute of "higher education" as the home for our Education Conference -- how appropriate! Don't miss this one. Mark October 18-20 on your calendars.



Book Your Hotel Room for the 2006 Annual Education Conference

The Local Arrangements Committee for the 2006 Annual Education Conference has reserved a block of rooms at the Kellogg Conference Center in East Lansing. Choosing to stay at the Kellogg Conference Center will put you in the center of the action. All meals and almost all conference programming will be held there. The hotel is also just a short walk to downtown East Lansing shops and restaurants. Mention the phrase "MHSLA Conference" when you reserve your room by **September 17, 2006** and receive the group discount rate. The special conference rate will not be available after this date, so be sure to book your hotel room now!

Contact the Kellogg Conference Center at 1-800-875-5090 or online at <http://www.hfs.msu.edu/kellogg/accommodations/reservations.html>.

“My HealthVet” – Clarification and More Information

By Karen Tubolino
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In the last issue of the newsletter (Winter 2006, no. 80), Sherry Moravy-Penchansky wrote about [My HealthVet](#) (MHV), an Internet based patient tool to help veterans manage their own health care issues and communicate with their health care providers. I want to clear up some potential misunderstanding about this resource.

It is designed specifically for veterans and their families or significant others. It is not designed for the general public. However, the veteran does not have to be a patient at a VA facility. This is where hospital librarians come in. If you are working with a patient who is also a veteran, please show them the MHV web site (<http://www.myhealth.va.gov>). You may want to check the web site out and become familiar with its features. Ms. Moravy-Penchansky did a good job describing this resource in the last issue, but I always get more out of exploring a web site for myself beyond just reading a description.

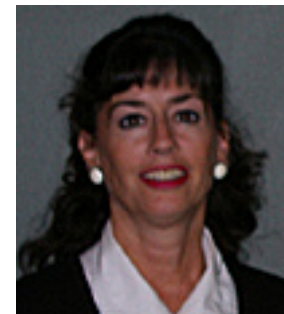
Only veterans who are VA patients can use certain advanced features such as online medication refills, copies of their personal medical record, and email consultation with their physician. However, there are many helpful and useful features available to all veterans including ready access

to information about veteran benefits, space to enter personal health data, and access to other health resources via links to MedlinePlus, VA-sponsored research on veterans' issues, and Healthwise.

If you have any questions about the web site please contact one of the VA librarians in Michigan: (Sara Peth in Ann Arbor, Linda Polardino in Battle Creek, Mary Jo Durivage or myself in Detroit)

2006 Computers in Libraries Conference

By Barbara Platts, MLIS, AHIP
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Thanks to a generous Professional Development Award from the National Network of Libraries of Medicine, Greater Midwest Region (NN/LM GMR), I was able to attend the 2006 Computers in Libraries conference in Washington, D.C. The conference provided a wealth of knowledge and networking opportunities all related to dead, current, and emerging technologies for libraries. Below is a summary of the conference.

Preconference Sessions

There were two eight-hour sessions and eight four-hour sessions offered to attendees

prior to the start of the conference. Session topics included advanced weblogs, social tools, teaching the Internet, current awareness delivery options, technology planning, advanced thinking for web searchers, creating online tutorials, building taxonomies, a Searchers Academy, and a Web Management Academy.

I attended the session on creating online tutorials using screencasting technology. This session provided the knowledge and tools necessary to create online tutorials efficiently and effectively. A brief overview focused on the advantages and disadvantages of implementing tutorials using traditional technologies. Screencasting options, as well as the screencasting process were discussed. Several online tutorials created using the screencasting technology were demonstrated. Screen capture, voice recording software, and a screencasting project management outline rounded out the session.

General Conference

The general conference sessions were divided into four learning tracks: Information Discovery and Search, Web Design and Development, Communities and Collaboration, and Digital Innovation, Technologies and Ideas. This format provided conference attendees four session options at any given time. Sessions were generally 45 minutes long and began after a morning keynote speaker. Keynote speakers included Chris Sherman, who provided a search engine report, Megan Fox who discussed planning for a handheld mobile future, and Lee Ranie, from the Pew Internet and American Life Project. Lee talked about enhancing digital

work and play. One evening session was offered and featured a panel that discussed dead and emerging technologies.

Internet @ Schools - East, provided a two-day forum for School Media Specialists. Day one focused on the virtual library school imperative. The second day offered sessions on emerging technologies for school libraries. An Internet Café was available for email access in the exhibit hall.

Sessions I attended included how to build communities using instant messaging, collaborating with e-learning communities, technology project management, catalogs and OPACS of the future, wikis, and the net of the future - Croquet.



Postconference Sessions

There were eight 4-hour postconference sessions available to attendees. Topics included sessions on digital initiatives, integrating RSS, service strategies, buying

digital content, implementing federated search engines and open URL software, digitization project management, mining blogs and RSS for research, personal information management techniques, analyzing website user behavior, mobile searching and computing, and searching multiple repositories.



I attended the session on federated searching and open URL software, which provided practical, informative and useful course content. The session defined the two technologies in detail and then provided specific aspects of each software application such as the relationship between source and target content, the context of sensitive links, citation format, MARC, meta searching, levels of connectivity, search formats, search results, and common command language.

Implementation technology, including Z39.50, was thoroughly discussed as well as attribute sets, a virtual catalog application, metadata harvesting, the client server interaction, library application profiles, network architecture requirements, authentication interface customization, configuring resources, defining collections, and emerging technologies. Northwestern University and the University of Pittsburgh provided an in-depth compare and contrast profile of their respective end products using federated search engine and open URL software applications.

Conference Summary

The Computers in Libraries conference offered a vast array of educational choices and networking opportunities. The conference provided a forum for learning practical “nuts and bolts” applications that can be adapted to hospital IT infrastructures that add value by enhancing access and delivery of library services.

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Introducing Two New Search Tools

*By Jaime Friel Blanck
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Recently, two new products of interest to health sciences researchers and librarians were announced: HubMed and Google Co-Op.

HubMed (<http://www.hubmed.org>)

HubMed was developed as an alternate interface to PubMed. It allows users to search the PubMed database and provides a number of additional features. Users can create RSS feeds for their search query that are compatible with common newreader software such as RSS Owl, Liferea, and NetNewsWire. The free Blogging feature lets you create a personal blog that you can use to download citations and abstracts that

can then be annotated with personal comments. Several links from individual item records let users automatically search other databases such as Scopus and Google using the original query. PubMed also offers two visual results options: TouchGraph and Graph. TouchGraph will display search results in a Java-based visual displays. The Graph feature creates a chart which tracks the number of articles published on the selected topic by year.



Google Co-op (<http://www.google.com/coop>)

Google Co-op (still in beta version) is a new product offering an innovative method for libraries to reach users. This new service will allow you to identify websites you consider to be authoritative on a specific topic. (Google is already working on several topics, one of which is "[Health](#)"). You can create a profile that others can subscribe to (you have to provide a link to your profile, only a small number of the most popular profiles are displayed in the Google Co-op Directory). As a Developer you can create XML "labels" for websites that will rank them higher in Google's search results for subscribers to your profile. The process of creating the XML labels is not a quick one or one aimed at the novice user. Some XML expertise is needed. You may have already noticed that the Google search results page has changed for health related searches. That's because everyone is automatically subscribed to the major health resources (click [here](#) for the list). Now a list of terms such as "Treatment", "For Patients", "For Professionals", "From Medical Authorities", etc. appears just above the results. Clicking on any of these terms will refine the initial search to reflect the term chosen. The user can see the altered query in the search box. The labels that have been applied to each web page in the results are display immediately below each result. Give it a try!



News and Announcements

The University of Michigan announced that **Jane Blumenthal** has been appointed as Director, Health Sciences Libraries. Blumenthal was previously assistant dean for knowledge management and director of the Dahlgren Memorial Library at Georgetown University.

Diane Gardner at McLaren Regional Medical Center in Flint, Michigan, has been awarded two scholarships to assist her in completing her MLIS degree from Wayne State University. She received the student scholarship from MDMLG and a scholarship from the Miriam T. Larson Memorial Endowed Scholarship at Wayne State University. She expects to complete her degree in 2007.

Eleanor Lopez of Holland Hospital's Health InfoSource library was named as one of "West Michigan's 50 Women of Influence" by *i* magazine.

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