

REPORTER

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The Illinois Library Association Reporter

is a forum for those who are improving and reinventing Illinois libraries, with articles that seek to: explore new ideas and practices from all types of libraries and library systems; examine the challenges facing the profession; and inform the library community and its supporters with news and comment about important issues. The *ILA Reporter* is produced and circulated with the purpose of enhancing and supporting the value of libraries, which provide free and equal access to information. This access is essential for an open democratic society, an informed electorate, and the advancement of knowledge for all people.



ON THE COVER

Jon Roll of Roll • Barresi & Associates
Illinois Wesleyan University, Ames Library

The logo of the Ames Library, a 103,000-square-foot facility opening in 2001 at Illinois Wesleyan University costing \$26 million, honors B. Charles and Joyce Eichhorn Ames for whom the library is named. The logo art design is by Jon Roll of Roll • Barresi & Associates, who assisted the architects Shepley Bulfinch Richardson and Abbot of Boston.

This year's *ILA Reporter* covers showcase the incredibly rich heritage of Illinois libraries photographed, inventoried electronically, and archived in "Art and Architecture in Illinois Libraries." (See April 2006 *ILA Reporter*, pp. 12–17.) This project was supported by the Illinois State Library, a division of the Office of Secretary of State, using funds provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) under the federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). Principal investigators: Allen Lanham and Marlene Slough, Eastern Illinois University.

The Illinois Library Association is the voice for Illinois libraries and the millions who depend on them. It provides leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library services in Illinois and for the library community in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all. It is the eighth oldest library association in the world and the third largest state association in the United States, with members in academic, public, school, government, and special libraries. Its 2,900 members are primarily librarians and library staff, but also trustees, publishers, and other supporters.

The Illinois Library Association has three full-time staff members. It is governed by a sixteen-member executive board, made up of elected officers. The association employs the services of Kolkmeier Consulting for legislative advocacy. ILA is a 501(c) (3) charitable and educational organization.

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A Trustee for the Twenty-First Century

It sounded so simple, so obvious — discuss the transformation of the library board and its constituent members as the world moved into the new century and Library 2.0. When I first contemplated this article, I envisioned circulating a short questionnaire amongst my friends and colleagues, pulling together a consensus on the most needed knowledge and talents for library board members in this age of change. So I did. As soon as the responses began rolling in I discovered what should have been obvious — other than a few common sense answers, there were as many different opinions as there were questionnaires distributed. And even though there were several with good ideas that I could draw on, particularly those submitted by Donna Dziedzic of Naperville Public Library and Tamiye Meehan of Indian Trails Public Library District, it was time to go back to the drawing board.

Next, I decided to look further afield and see what I could find from beyond my personal relationships. I scanned the *Library, Information Science, & Technology Abstracts* (LISTA) database, to see what other research had been done on the topic. After all, it wasn't hard to admit that someone out there might have done a better job writing a questionnaire than I had. To my surprise, the last comprehensive articles on the transformation of library board trustees seemed to date back to the last century. All right, they were from 1994, but the last century sounded more dramatic, and fourteen years has seen considerable change in the library world, as

well as society at large. Furthermore, a somewhat disproportionate number of articles on trustees came from previous issues of the *ILA Reporter*. While I was glad to see that our local community was aware of the importance of library board members and concerned with the issues surrounding them, it ran against the idea of looking farther afield. It looked like this had become more of a thought experiment. So I sat down and thought.

What were the issues surrounding today's libraries, and what changes in trustee talents or behaviors did they necessitate? The first idea that sprang to mind was the trend of the erosion of intellectual and personal freedoms, highlighted by, but by no means limited to, the USA PATRIOT Act. Every year we see new legislation introduced, which, if passed, would limit access to information, exclude certain groups from government services, or allow governmental bodies access to heretofore private information. Indeed, there are forces at work in society — terrorism, issues of Internet safety, and rapid changes in the global economy, just to name a few — which make such legislation seem attractive in certain circumstances. The key for current trustees is to find the balance between these societal forces and the longstanding place of libraries as sources of knowledge and information and as champions of intellectual liberty, and hold to the path that best serves their local communities, while maintaining libraries as a cornerstone of democracy.

[continued on page 6]



“If you can do more, do more.
Step up and serve your community,
or encourage others to join you
if you are already there.”

Another issue frequently mentioned is the changing nature of libraries and the information within them. Just what is a library? The name suggests that it is a repository for books, but that falls far short of the current concept of the library as a source of information and access, a center of learning, and a gathering place for the community. This current concept developed as the norms of information storage grew from the written and printed page to include information stored in a variety of audio and visual formats, and as the patterns of learning and study grew beyond poring over texts to include listening to audio, viewing video, group discussions, lectures, performances, and all of the services we commonly see in libraries today. Board members need to remember, however, that technology and society keep expanding the framework of information and discourse, and libraries need to continue to alter themselves if they wish to remain relevant to their community members.

Which brings us to another issue: continual change is not cheap. At the end of the last century, this was still an issue, but it didn't loom nearly as large. The economy was strong, or at least stronger than now, and while technologies were moving fast, libraries managed to keep up. Technology is still charging ahead, but the current economy is making it harder and harder for libraries to maintain the pace. Fiscal oversight is a much more challenging issue for current board members than perhaps it was in previous decades. Referenda are harder and harder to pass, but many library buildings are obsolete in their design or construction. Libraries and related institutions are finding that the traditional lines of funding are falling short, and new sources of revenue need to be found.

I sat back. While this was a far from exhaustive list of issues, it gave me a basis from which to evaluate trustees, and ponder the skills that would help them deal with these trends. But the more I pondered, the more something became clear: none of the skills needed to cope with the changing environment were, hopefully, new. While some may call it a universal truth, and others merely a truism, it is hard to argue with the old saw that the one constant is change. But in a continually growing and flexing social environment, the skills needed to set a course for a library seem little different than those needed fourteen or even forty years ago.

To deal with the seeming flood of legislation, today's trustee, like yesterday's, needs to hone his advocacy skills and develop her political acumen. Trustees are a library's ambassadors, not only representing the local community during the policy-making deliberations in the boardroom, but also representing the library and the local community to the broader world. It is every trustee's responsibility to be actively involved in the community and learn about the issues so as to best serve the needs of both

the citizens and the organizations they represent. It is also every trustee's responsibility to be a voice when needed, be it in city hall, Springfield, or Washington, D.C. Of course, to be an effective voice, individuals need to learn when, where, and how best to chime in, lest the message be lost.

When faced with the changing nature of their libraries, trustees need to exercise the skills of awareness, self-education, and evaluation. Awareness can be as simple as keeping up with societal trends. You don't have to suffer from "Texter's Thumb" yourself to know that text messaging has become one of today's standard forms of communication, or own an iPod to know that downloadable media are here to stay. If you are aware that something might have an impact on your library or its services, the next logical step is to educate yourself about it. Trustees have a wide range of educational opportunities available, ranging from the staffs of their own institutions, to their regional systems, or to the various library conferences held regularly at the state and national level. Once a trustee is comfortable with a topic or issue, it is time to ask the question, "How will this impact our library and what sort of policies, if any, are needed to cope with it?"

Finally, today's trustee needs to develop a firm grasp of fiscal policy and begin to venture into the realms of fundraising. A firm grasp of fiscal policy goes far beyond just making sure the director has a budget and sticks to it. Board members need to be able to read and understand fiscal documents, remain aware of economic issues affecting the community, know where tax funds are coming from and what other governmental bodies are competing for their citizens' taxes, be responsible for ensuring sufficient funding, and be aware of any possible future impacts on the library's resources and revenues. Again, this is no different than board responsibilities from decades past, but today's trustee may be dealing with even tighter budgetary strictures than their predecessors. This makes it all the more likely that boards will have to engage in fundraising beyond the traditional tax paths. This brings us right back to the trustee's role as community ambassador!

I could leave this article at the point of saying, "the more things change, the more they stay the same," but I have observed one somewhat disturbing trend in today's boards away from previous generations. It may be a case of idolizing the past, but it seems to me as if there are fewer and fewer citizens stepping forward to carry their libraries' banners. I regularly hear tales of incomplete boards, or trustees with personal agendas elected because there was no one to run against them. Have apathy and disregard taken hold of a once proud pillar of democracy? If this is so, and not merely a misperception, then this is the transformation most vitally needed in our trustees: it is time to rekindle the passion. If you can do more, do more. Step up and serve your community, or encourage others to join you if you are already there. Support the trustees of the twenty-first century. ■▲



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Do They Love Us? Do They Hate Us? Do They Even Know We Are Here?

[Community Surveys and What They Can Do for Our Organizations!]

It's time for a community survey! Do you dread hearing that? Didn't you just conduct one? Or was that ten years ago? Did you really learn anything from all of that effort? How can you improve the process and results?

Libraries survey their current patrons and potential patrons for a number of reasons. A community survey can help develop plans, define and solve problems, prioritize projects, and gain community support. It can give us a picture of what our community is thinking. Sometimes it is a requirement to receive special funding. At other times we want a picture of what our community is thinking; we might be heading toward a referendum and want to hear the concerns of our community and then get some buy-in.

You should first identify the survey's central purpose. Is it to gauge patron satisfaction or to determine why potential patrons do not use the library? What can and should you be providing those who do not perceive value in your offerings and services? Could the survey help develop long-range goals and determine

the allocation of limited resources? You also might want to develop publicity for the library or possibly develop a data-driven justification or rationale for increasing the tax levy for library buildings and/or improvements.

Once your organization decides to undertake a survey, you must determine not its fundamental goal, but how you will use the data. Multiple purposes or missions may confuse and dilute the depth of data that can be collected for sound data-driven information. After you have established your goal, there are several strategic questions, which will direct the structuring of specific survey items. These core strategic questions are:

What do users like about the library and what do they use?

What improvements do users want to see?

Why do some people not use the library?

What are the needs of the residents?

[continued on page 10]

“A community survey can be helpful in developing plans, defining and solving problems, prioritizing projects, and gaining community support.”



“A community-based survey is not necessarily an annual occurrence. However, it is something which should be done at least every four to five years.”

Responses to these items will enable you to find out what your users like about the library and the improvements they would like to see. Non-users will let you know why they have not taken advantage of the library's services. When reviewing survey results, one of the most important things to remember is that users and non-users alike tend to respond in the context of what the library already does or what they think the library does. Most who work in public libraries know that when you ask patrons what they want, they ask for more parking and longer hours. For strategic planning and the development of new programs and services, we need to understand the issues and concerns of our residents. Then it is up to the library staff and board to determine which of those needs, issues, and concerns the library can best address. We often fail to go to this next step. Combine your survey with an environmental scan and ask your patrons which changes are affecting them personally and about which they have concerns.

When hiring a consultant or consulting organization, ask to see results of surveys completed in the past. Do the results tell you why patrons use the library? Do they come for recreational and school assignment purposes or to take out audiovisual materials? Does the study tell you that non-users do not use the library because they are too busy, or use the Internet or another library? Is the information reported new and useful? What would you do with the type of information reported? Is there anything there that one could not determine through existing statistics or through staff interaction with patrons?

WHAT MAKES FOR A SUCCESSFUL SURVEY PROJECT?

Successful projects have the following characteristics:

- A broad base of ownership of the survey and its results. Library staff and the board have input and review of what will constitute the final survey instrument.
- The purpose and outcomes defined at the beginning of the project, dictating the data to collect, are achieved.
- The survey results identify strategic issues, which the board and staff need to address with strategic planning or some other means.
- The final report has some analysis and suggested action items.

WHAT DELIVERY APPROACHES CAN BE USED TO DISTRIBUTE THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT TO THE TARGET SURVEY RESPONDENTS?

There are essentially four different distribution approaches for community surveys: 1) postal mail, 2) online via the Internet, 3) telephone, and 4) focus group interviews. The distribution method to use depends on the central purpose, and expected data and information outcomes. Other factors that need to be considered are costs, time schedules, and desired participation level. Here are some things to consider for each of them.

MAIL SURVEYS

A mail survey can reach the entire population of the library's district. There are instances in which the library may want to make such a reach. There are no technological exclusion and/or limitation issues related to technology, which are factors in online and telephone surveys.

The results can be stratified based upon collected demographics. Generally this type of survey instrument can be longer and more comprehensive than other types of surveys. Unlike the other types, these surveys are physically present with the responder. Additionally, mailing to the entire community provides every household with an opportunity to participate in providing input. This may be very helpful when the library district is seeking additional funds for new programs and facilities. Finally, a broad community-based mailing has the tendency to create a true stratified random sample of responses that has a positive impact on lowering the statistical measure known as the “standard error of measure.”

From a cost viewpoint there is a lower cost per completed survey than phone surveys.



TELEPHONE INTERVIEW SURVEYS

Interview surveys are used when there is a focused population subset from which data are being sought. From a cost standpoint this approach could be the most expensive and not very efficient. Further, the expanding use of cell phones as the principal telecommunications channel limits accessibility to that portion of the population that does not utilize landline phone technology. Telephone surveys are very labor intensive because of the use of interviewers. Costs are usually controlled by limiting the number of calls, resulting in exclusion of input from a wide range of individuals. Because of these factors, the sample is often not representative of the community as a whole.

ONLINE SURVEYS

Online surveys work well for shorter, focused inquiry and research. Participants should be able to complete the survey in eight to ten minutes, research and anecdotal observations and studies have reported that when people are online, they want to get things done quickly. If the survey is not completed in one session, the respondents are unlikely to return to finish. The population set as potential respondents is limited to those who have access to and regularly use the Internet. This type of delivery works best with a population that are committed as patrons or have a strong affiliation with the library. If an institution is known to the respondent, there is a greater likelihood of receiving a response than not.

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS

While these types of activities are technically considered surveys, they are not intended for gathering the extent and depth of information upon which strategic decisions should be made. Focus groups are generally limited to fifteen to twenty people and are designed and intended to be used as the basis for developing a comprehensive survey. In short, focus groups provide researchers with the types of questions and content of the data gathering items that are to be included in the final survey, but the results should not be used for any other type of decision making.

WHAT PUBLICITY, IF ANY, ABOUT THE SURVEY IS NEEDED?

Regardless of the delivery method chosen, the library leadership needs to plan to sensitize and alert the community that it is conducting a community-based survey and articulate its central purpose. Such publicity will encourage their participation.

A community-based survey is not necessarily an annual occurrence. However, it is something which should be completed at least every four to five years. Therefore, from a financial perspective, the cost of the survey can be amortized over the time between surveys and across the entire community being surveyed. However, the real return and value that such a survey provides are the ability of the library board and staff to chart a strategic course for future direction based upon data and information directly from the community. **ILA**

Re-Thinking “Virtual” Reference

There will be no national Virtual Reference Desk [VRD] conference this year. And this is a good thing. A conference will be held in Denver in August, site of previous VRD conclaves, but the conference has been re-named the Reference Renaissance: Current and Future Trends. The change is more than cosmetic.

THE VIRTUAL PROBLEM

What we have come to realize is that the term *virtual* does not really describe what we are doing. It has been denigrated as “reference-lite” over the Internet where a distant librarian redoes a simple Google search or forwards a Wikipedia article to the user without much interaction. This problem is not the fault of the medium but reflects a librarian not doing professional level work.

Sub-caliber reference work is not limited to electronic communication. It can only be seen more clearly because the availability of transcripts from many electronic interactions. There have always been some reference librarians (hopefully a shrinking minority) who are only willing to give the most expedient answer to the question asked without bothering to conduct a reference interview. This attitude has never served our profession well. Reference will flourish only if libraries can provide a full-service reference experience for users on a consistent basis. Interestingly, the electronic networking of the reference process may be the means to accomplish this goal.

SERVING THE REMOTE USER

Does your library still answer only ready reference questions over the telephone and require users to come into the building to get research done? If so, why limit the definition of your service community to those willing to be physically present in your library? I have developed productive relationships with people in my community whom I have never physically met. The telephone and e-mail usually provide adequate means for the transmission of ideas and information from interactions sometimes begun via Instant Messaging (IM) or from a forwarded transcript of an AskAway session.



The director of my library recently inquired why Skokie consistently has the highest usage of the after-hours Night-Owl telephone reference service. I explained that this probably is due to the quality of the telephone reference service our callers receive during the day. The telephone along with IM chat and e-mail, are means of communication with our communities. Undoubtedly, the medium influences the timbre of these communications, but we need not relinquish our commitment to professional level reference service because the interaction is not face-to-face. The service we provide is not “virtual” reference service, but reference service for our community when they are not in the library, which might be shortened to something like *remote reference*.

NETWORKED REFERENCE

AskAway Illinois celebrates its third anniversary soon. To this point, you may have conceived of it as a way to provide “virtual” or Internet-based reference service for your community, and that’s primarily what it has been. But if this is all AskAway is, the oft heard argument that reference service delivered through an IM chat box on library Web pages provides the same type of service at no cost would be somewhat substantiated. On the contrary, AskAway has the potential to be, if used effectively, the model for quality reference service for the twenty-first century.

The reason is that AskAway is really networked reference. With the power of the consortium, questions taken in the middle of the night by a librarian in another part of the country or world can be dealt with to the extent possible in real time. If additional work is needed, the question can be routed to the home library or a subject expert for follow-up in the morning.

Professions are strengthened by consultation and referral. Just as a legal or medical professional confers with specialists or experts to ensure optimal results, the reference librarian will best serve the questioner by sharing questions with colleagues and specialists.

No matter what the medium of intake, questions can be fed into the QuestionPoint system that AskAway runs on. This means that questions beyond the scope of local resources and expertise can be routed to librarians best suited to answer them. Though this system is in its infancy, modern systems of social networking should be adapted for professional networking among reference librarians to ensure that questions are shared and answered by collaboration with subject specialists.


Some time ago I handled a question relating to the value and history of a classic paper shopping bag in the patron’s possession. I used the now defunct Bowker guide to library subject collections to find that the Library of the Cooper-Hewitt Museum of Design in New York has a special collection of shopping bags. I e-mailed the curator and received information I never would have been able to find myself to provide an answer for the patron. This is the kind of networking that we should be regularly providing

our users in the Internet age with electronic networking replacing the old Bowker guide.

Back in the 1990s the backup reference service offered by the North Suburban Library System was abandoned. I was on a committee charged with envisioning a system by which networked communications could be leveraged to fill the gap. While the Internet-based discussions and forums that came out of this effort have helped us share knowledge and expertise, we have never established a mechanism to help frontline reference librarians handle those questions that are beyond their scope. Backup reference service by Illinois Library Systems is now a thing of the past. AskAway Illinois has the makings of the reference safety net of the future.

To remain relevant in the age of Google, reference librarians must be prepared to handle the questions not easily resolved by googling. People do want information immediately, but I have found that if it is important to them, they are willing to wait for quality results. As Joe Janes says, we will not out-google Google, but we must play to our strengths to provide quality results to people who approach us for professional service. The development and acceptance of networked reference by our profession are the keys to the survival of reference as a major component of the library of the future. Infomercial answer-man Matthew Lesko for years has pitched the untapped potential of experts in government and nonprofit organizations waiting to share their expertise with the public. Networked reference provides us the means to use social networking technology to systematically leverage these specialists for our users.

QuestionPoint is changing. A Qwidget, or simple chat box interface similar to IM, was introduced recently to simplify the interface for users to input queries. Several libraries have purchased their own queue, so that questions submitted from within their library or from their own library Web site can be answered by local staff during library hours. Though this is now the exception rather than the rule, there are indications that OCLC will make this option a more reasonable one for individual libraries or small groups of libraries to implement. What this means is that Internet-based remote reference can be integrated into regular reference service much as the telephone is today. In the ideal setup, local librarians handle questions from their community whenever they are available and through whatever medium they are received. When a local librarian is not available, the question is picked up by the network and routed back to the home library for follow-up if necessary. The home library can feed questions beyond its scope, no matter what the medium of the question’s receipt, to the network to be addressed by a subject specialist.

More than three hundred libraries have joined AskAway. Membership begins at \$45 for the smallest libraries and costs significantly less than a small subscription database for larger libraries. AskAway Illinois is the Illinois reference network. Join today to help it reach its potential. For additional information, contact Natalie Tagge at the Illinois State Library at (217) 557-6329 or via e-mail at ntagge@ilsos.net. 

An Interview with iRead 2009 Illustrator Patrick Girouard

The 2009 iREAD artist for the theme “Read on the Wild Side” is Patrick Girouard, a prolific illustrator of children’s books, including *Halloween* by Alice K. Flanagan. Recently, he replied to our questions via e-mail dispatch from the darkest forests of Indiana.



What was your first library experience?

It was probably with the bookmobile that came around our neighborhood in Missouri when I was little. That vehicle wasn’t as exciting as the ice cream man, but it was a close second. I recall taking a field trip to visit the gigantic central library in St. Louis when I was in second grade. We had spent a good chunk of that year reading Winnie-the-Pooh stories aloud in class, and that library had the actual teddy bear A. A. Milne wrote about on display at the time. It was my first brush with a celebrity.



When you were ten, what was your favorite book, and why?

The year after I “met” Winnie-the-Pooh my family moved to Connecticut and a couple of things happened that made a big difference in my life. First, my parents decided to rid our home of television. After my siblings and I calmed down we found that we had a lot more free time to fill. Luckily, the second thing that happened to me was a neighbor up the hill called Mrs. Owens. She introduced me to *Ghosts of New England*, and an author named Hans Holzer. Our new home had a great public library within walking distance, and by the time I was ten I had read and reread everything I could find there by Holzer. Those books led to others by similar authors, but gradually gave way to Ray Bradbury, Robert Heinlein, and eventually Kurt Vonnegut, who was the perfect author for my early teen years.

When you were that age, what did you want to be when you grew up?

I always wanted to be an artist, but I had no idea what that meant back then. I had a vague image of a guy with a beret, pointy beard, and a pipe. My dad was a corporate insurance broker and is fairly conservative. I always kind of felt that he would expect me to go into the business world, but when I cautiously mentioned going to art school he was 100 percent behind me. Turned out that he absolutely hated his job and didn’t want me to end up in that position.



“I always wanted to be an artist, but I had no idea what that meant back then. I had a vague image of a guy with a beret, pointy beard, and a pipe.”

When did you start drawing and what were your early inspirations?


I recently came across an old family Christmas letter that my mother had written when I was about five years old. She wrote that I loved spending my time “drawing pictures that tell stories.” When I flipped it over there was an early rendering of Superman, who was a huge inspiration to me. Later I went through monsters, robots, and science fiction phases along with the very odd combination of dune buggies and leprechauns. I mean that leprechauns drove the dune buggies. I can’t recall the thought process behind that!

What led you to children’s books?

I guess it was a natural way to go considering my love of reading and drawing. My sixth-grade teacher, Mrs. Kay, was a huge influence in that area, but it took years before that finally dawned on me. When it finally broke through my thick skull I made it my mission to track her down to say thank you. I was part of the very first class she taught and it had been more than thirty years. I was very touched that she not only remembered me, but also still had some of my drawings.

Tell us a little about your books. What are you currently working on?

I’m keeping busy on a number of fronts. Right now I’m working on two pop-up books for a publisher in England. They’re pretty challenging, and I have nothing but admiration and praise for the paper designer/engineer. As I write this I’m in the middle of a project for *Click* magazine and a number of educational jobs. In between all of that I’m working on a personal project that is based on that very same sixth-grade teacher.

<p>Saint Xavier University’s School of Education in partnership with Motherhead, Inc. <i>presents</i> The Power of Story: Language and Literacy in Context</p> <p>Professional Development Institute for Teachers and Public Librarians</p> <p>October 10-12, 2008 Saint Xavier University • Chicago Campus</p> <p>This workshop will focus on using children’s literature, storytelling, and the arts to support the language and literacy engagement of children and their families.</p> <p>For more information, visit www.sxu.edu/story.</p>	 <p>SAINT • XAVIER UNIVERSITY Success with Purpose. www.sxu.edu</p>
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What was your training? Did you go to college? Where?

I went to the Paier School of Art in Hamden, Conn. They didn't offer a degree program at that time; it was more like a vocational school with a high attrition rate. With the exception of freshman English all of the academics were art related — perspective, art history, anatomy in some form every day for all four years. Their philosophy was that one should learn the rules before breaking them. I really loved my time there and was fortunate to have some amazing teachers.

What other jobs have you had? Do your past work experiences impact your art?

I worked a million jobs through high school and college — security guard, janitor, dog groomer, medical school test subject, landscaper, truck driver, bus driver, pantry chef, and more. My first job after I graduated from Paier was in an ice factory. It was twenty-eight degrees all day every day, and my job was running 300-pound blocks of ice through a series of saws to make cubes. They let me take Wednesdays and Thursdays off to go into New York City with my portfolio where I would face a wall of indifference and rejection. At least it was warm.

By that November I had two job prospects, one in Kansas City at Hallmark, and the other in the marketing department of a Chicago engineering firm. I weighed every aspect of both offers very carefully, and naturally chose the one that paid the most — Chicago. I gradually began to get freelance illustration jobs on the side, first for greeting card companies, then magazines and newspapers. After a while I signed on with artist's rep Paige Gillies and was able to become a full-time freelancer. What was the question again?

Do you have a particular set of emotions that you are trying to elicit with your work?

Hmm. My first job is to serve the story, and there's a definite place for every emotion in illustration. But if I was left on my own it would generally be happy happy joy joy.

Generally, what do you want kids to take away from your art?

Let me say that I don't for a minute believe that my work is anywhere near where I would like it to be. But in a perfect world, in that place between my ears that I keep trying to get on paper, it would be a sense of fun. Like the kind that I loved when I was little and would stare at the illustration of the treetop party in *Go Dog Go* and wish that I could be there too. The slightly anarchic kind of fun that you find in a Marx Brothers movie. The kind that your mom and dad might object to but the Cat in the Hat would encourage. The kind that

Tomi Ungerer drew in the train station and scientific conference scenes of *The Beast of Monsieur Racine*. I'm not there, but I'll keep trying to head in that direction for as long as I can hold a pencil.

Girouard has illustrated many, many books, including I Have a Weird Brother Who Digested a Fly by Joan Holub, Paul Bunyan by Bill Balczak, More or Less a Mess! by Sheila Keenan, The Sleepover by Nora Gaydos, a joke book series by Pam Rosenberg, and Yikes—Lice! by Donna Caffey. Interested readers can find a comprehensive bibliography of the books illustrated by Patrick at <http://www.patrickgirouard.com/>.

Girouard will be the featured speaker at the 2008 Youth Services Breakfast on Thursday, September 25 during the 2008 ILA Annual Conference in Chicago. ■



Summer Postcards from Libraries and Librarians

Summer vacations provide so many opportunities to explore your thoughts. The daily routine is interrupted, you are surrounded by new people who have different ideas for you to ponder, and the usual “to do” list is put on hold while you look at the world with invigorated eyes. I know many of you enjoy the fall and winter breaks, but I think the summer can be the most relaxing and carefree season. Easy for an academic or school librarian to say, though that idea may not be shared by our colleagues from public libraries where their summer programs are so vital to the health of the communities.

One element of the summer that refreshes us all is to receive a postcard from an exotic locale, perhaps from a friend or colleague. Obviously, the messages sent don't always rely upon library finds from afar — that would be too good! — but you never know what will be on the card, except that your mail carrier will know it first!



Hi John...

Greetings from Rome. What a trip! The Sistine experience was ruined by a zealous officer telling everyone to move to the back and be quiet. Glad American libraries have given up on those shushing policies. Now we can ooh and aah all we want at those fab PC labs.

Thanks for cataloging our postcards! Ciao.

[continued on page 20]





Hi Pam...

Knew you would love this card. The European grocery market offers a plethora of hints for the modern library. Putting together a picnic illustrates this beautifully. Want cheese? How about 300 varieties from which to choose. Need bread, ham, wine, or olives? Oh, my! Look how they are displayed. The selection is incredible, but the most impressive advantage is that there is an expert standing close by to help you and make suggestions.

Wish you were here.



Wowweee Zowwee...

Get a load of this one! The church and museum libraries are chocked full of treasures. Not an OPAC in sight, but, hey... I am on vacation. But, I'll admit: I am missing those Illinois libraries where everything is so, so.. you know. (Great.)

Auf Wiedersehen.



Hi Marty...

Churches cannot be held up as models for providing access to their precious materials. Their libraries, often small, hold treasures which go unrecognized by their visitors. The aide, who led us into the sacristy of a certain church which will go unnamed, pulled from a shelf a copy of the 1502 Zurich Bible. He showed it to us saying that it was their worn copy and therefore could be seen briefly. The place was full of other people who trooped through on a tour which perhaps ignored the most precious items held there... but this is a librarian speaking.

You should have seen those chocolates from last night! Pastries galore.

Please do a subject search before I get home: dieting, reducing — problem tourist



Hi Roy...

The lions here guard the monument to a forgotten monarch in Geneva. Of course, it seems like the entrance to the Art Institute of Chicago or the New York Public Library, oui? I am also reminded of the Alliance pig sculptures guarding so many Ill. libraries. Speaking of pork... how are the Springfield budget preparations coming along?

See you next week. Au revoir!

[continued on page 22]

As part of the *Art and Architecture in Illinois Libraries* project, Booth Library has collected a sizable number of postcards documenting libraries across the state. These have been cataloged and appear in the EIU Online Catalog (a part of I-Share) with a digitized image of the card attached. They also will appear in the final *Art and Architecture* online database. Thanks go to the Illinois State Library, LSTA, CARLI, and Eastern Illinois University for their support of the overall project.

If your library has additional postcards, historical or current, which are not yet represented in the EIU Online Catalog, we would be happy to add additional card images only if there is a card available for our collection through gift or purchase. Please send us the details for the acquisition.

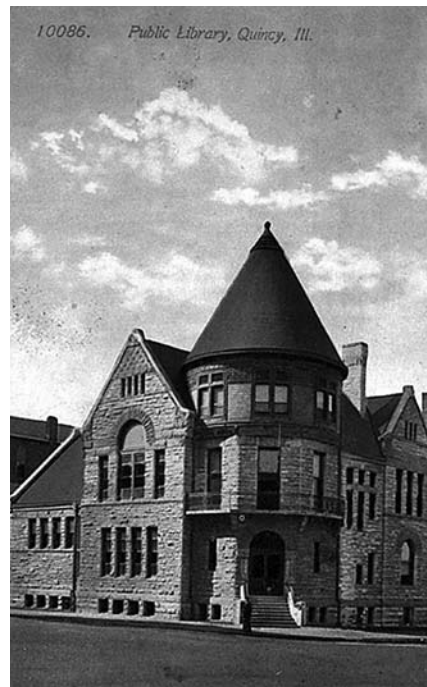
Meanwhile, enjoy a few of the cards already completed.



Buck Memorial Library, Illinois Wesleyan University, the first library home



Early view of Morris Library, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale, currently under renovation and expansion



Former home of the Quincy Public Library



Library and Administration Building, George Williams College, Downers Grove, razed in 2007



McCoy Public Library, McLeansboro



As we look forward to summer's end and the glorious fall season, let's pledge to take on a few challenges. Not those that routinely come around, but some which we instigate. How about:

- **Take someone to lunch.** Invite a new professor, teacher, or business person in your area to have a serious library conversation and to pledge support for the library.
- **Rid your office of one pile of paper.** You will feel better about your office, and can use the space to house a new project that you want to sink your teeth into.
- **Reach out to a new librarian.** Introduce someone new to ILA and tell them about Illinois libraries.
- **Send a friend a postcard.** It takes only a moment and the friendship can last forever. Your mail carriers will have a nicer day, too. In fact, say hello to them in the message.

Next time, we will look at the recent dehumanization of the library. The summer was just too pretty to bring it up, but it is an issue that deserves our attention and is a part of the social communication sermons heard as of late. Bon voyage. **ILA**





At the Friday, June 6, 2008 ILA Executive Board meeting at the Metropolitan Library System, the following retired from the board: (l to r) Dean Bryan, Nancy Huntley, Tamiye Meehan, and Julie Milavec pictured with 2007–2008 ILA President Brad Baker.

Association for Rural and Small Libraries Conference

The annual national conference of the Association for Rural and Small Libraries (ARSL) will be held this fall in Sacramento, California, September 19 – 21, 2008. This is the first time in a very long time that the conference has moved from Columbus, Ohio. Conference information and registration, as well as membership information is available at www.webjunction.org/arsl. Featured speakers include: George Needham, Joan Frye Williams, Bill Harmer, and Jessamyn West. Early Bird Registration for members can be as low as \$148 for the full two-and-half day conference.

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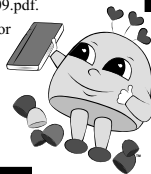
**Twenty \$1,000 Librarian Scholarships
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For complete details, please visit

<http://www.gumdropbooks.com/library/Scholarship08-09.pdf>.

If you have questions, please contact us at 800-651-2580 or email scholarships@gumdropbooks.com



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ILA Welcomes New Members

We would love to welcome your friends and colleagues, too. By sponsoring a new member, you share the benefits of membership with others... and help create a stronger and more effective voice to promote the highest quality library services for all people in Illinois.

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Jerri Picha, Warrenville Public Library District
Jesse Shears, William Leonard Library, Robbins

Cultural and Racial Diversity Committee

Sharon L. Highler, Shorewood-Troy Public Library

Hurry! It is not too late to register for the pre-conference bus tour or the DiversiTea! event at the 2008 ILA Annual Conference in Chicago. Check the ILA's Web site for registration information. We look forward to meeting you!

We will again host a teapot raffle during the annual DiversiTea on Wednesday, September 24 at 3:30 P.M. Last year, over a dozen lucky members won teapots from the raffle. Proceeds from the raffle go toward the Sylvia Murphy Williams Scholarship Fund, which supports outstanding Illinois residents in furthering their university education toward a degree in library science. The scholarship ties in with the highly competitive ALA Spectrum Scholarship. If you would like to contribute to the scholarship, please send a check to: Illinois Library Association, 33 W. Grand Ave., Ste. 301, Chicago, IL 60654 and indicate that your generous donation goes toward the Sylvia Murphy Williams Scholarship. Or, look for Cultural and Racial Diversity Committee members at the conference, near the registration area for teapot raffle tickets and we would be happy to accept your generous donations.

See you there!

Reaching Forward

Sally Schuster, Addison Public Library

The 2008 conference is over! The majority of the feedback was very positive. Joe Contrera, the keynote speaker, was one of this year's highlights. Dominican University's Michael Stephens will be the 2009 keynote speaker. Michael has spoken about technology, innovation, and libraries to audiences in over twenty-five states and in four countries, including a recent speaking tour of Australia.

Video clips of several speakers can

be seen on our Web site under News (<http://www.reachingforward.net/news/>). Take a look. As information becomes available about the 2009 conference, it will be added to the Web site.

This year's evaluation forms had a number of suggestions about the conference and future programming. These suggestions will be considered as the committee begins planning for the 2009 conference, which is scheduled for Friday, May 1, 2009, at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, 5555 North River Road, Rosemont.

There were a number of suggestions for future programs, including career development, online resources beyond library Web sites, interlibrary loan using OCLC and its features, staff rewards for good work, ways to survive natural disasters, investments, e-books, catching up with twenty-first century technology, resumé and job hunting tips for library-related jobs, programming for different age groups from toddlers to seniors, podcasts, time management, techniques for improving relationships between coworkers, suggestions for obtaining health benefits if the library does not provide them, libraries in transition, early literacy skills in story times, quilting and crafting, more authors, senior outreach, leading and maintaining a book or film discussion group, motivation and money, and teen stuff.

When committee members meet at Skokie Public Library on August 8 to begin planning next year's conference, they will consider these and many other topics. Finding excellent speakers to present these topics is important. If you have a suggestion for a program, you can submit a form through our Web site (http://www.reachingforward.org/suggest_programs_speakers.php). The committee loves new ideas, especially if you have a speaker in mind!

The committee was delighted to see many new attendees at this year's conference. The number of you who return each year is equally rewarding. We hope to continue offering a wide variety of quality programs. It is music to our ears when we hear that it is difficult choosing

which session to attend because there are so many interesting programs offered in each time slot.

If any of you are interested in joining the committee, please contact Tobi Oberman, e-mail: TOberman@skokieilibrary.info, phone: (847) 324-3123 or Tom Rich, e-mail: TomRichConsulting@gmail.com, phone: (847) 827-8578. Or you can submit a form through our Web site (http://www.reachingforward.org/join_committee.php). New members are always welcome.

Reference Services Forum (RSF)

Blaine Redemer, Illinois State Library

The RSF is pleased to announce that this year's Reference Services Award winner is Carolyn Mulac, Division Chief, General Information Services of the Chicago Public Library. Carolyn is being recognized for her years of active service in the library community and her positive influence on so many librarians who have worked with her or have read her numerous articles. The award, which is sponsored by ProQuest, will be presented at the Reference Services Forum Luncheon at the ILA annual conference at Navy Pier in Chicago, September 24.

The RSF would like to thank everyone who submitted a nomination or a letter of support for a candidate. The response this year was unprecedented — eleven nominations. It made for a wonderfully difficult process — wonderful because it highlighted some of the great things that Illinois libraries and librarians are doing and difficult because every one of them deserves recognition.

Just because a library or individual was nominated before does not mean they cannot be nominated again.

If there are any questions concerning the RSF please feel free to contact Blaine Redemer at bredemer@ilsos.net or call (217) 782-5430.

Resources & Technical Services Forum (RTSF)

Joy Anhalt, Tinley Park Public Library

The Resources and Technical Services Forum is sponsoring three programs at this year's conference. Please join us for the pre-conference on Tuesday, September 23, for Acquiring and Cataloging Video Game Collections. The RDA Update on Wednesday, September 24, will tell us about what is replacing AACR and how to implement it. On Friday, September 26, the panel for Quality or Quality in Your Catalog will share best practices in discovering and correcting various problems in maintaining a quality catalog.

Want a chance to network with your fellow catalogers? The forum's annual meeting will take place following the RTSF luncheon on Wednesday, September 24. We will begin planning programs for next year's conference and elect a new forum manager. Pre-registration is required for this event. Volunteers are also needed to contribute articles to the *ILA Reporter* and to assist with the forum's award. If you are interested in participating and are unable to attend the meeting please contact Joy Anhalt (phone: (708) 845-5713; e-mail: j_anhalt@tplibrary.org).

Serving Our Public:

Hearing on Proposed Revisions to the Standards for Illinois Public Libraries.

Wednesday, September 24, 3:30 – 5:00 P.M.
ILA Annual Conference, Navy Pier, Room 203–207


ILA invites your comments and questions concerning the proposed revisions to the public library standards (see June 2008 *ILA Reporter*; pages 14–17).

Drafts of several chapters are available on the ILA Web site: <http://www.ila.org/sop>. The chapters are accompanied by brief surveys to solicit your feedback. Your comments and ideas are vital at this stage and will shape the final document, which is expected to be available in February 2009.



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AUGUST 2008

- 5–7** **Synergy: The Illinois Library Leadership Initiative 2008**, Pere Marquette Lodge, Grafton. For further information, see Illinois State Library Web site <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/>.
- 10–14** **World Library and Information Congress: 74th International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) General Conference and Council**, Quebec, Canada. For further information, see IFLA Web site <http://www.ifla.org/>.
- 12** **Show Me the Money! Financial Strategies for Your Library**. Metropolitan Library System, 125 Tower Dr., Burr Ridge, IL 60527. See registration form on p. 30 in the June 2008 *ILA Reporter*. Register online at www.ila.org/events/.
- 15** **iREAD meeting**, 11:00 A.M., Peru Public Library, 1409 11th St., Peru, IL 61354; phone: (815) 223-0229.
- 20** **Deadline for October issue of the *ILA Reporter***.
- 25** **Show Me the Money! Financial Strategies for Your Library**. Alliance Library System, 600 High Point Lane, East Peoria, IL 61611. See registration form on p. 30 in the June 2008 *ILA Reporter*. Register online at www.ila.org/events/.
- 26** **Illinois State Library Advisory Committee**, Illinois State Library, Springfield, Ill.

SEPTEMBER 2008

- 23–26** **ILA Annual Conference at Navy Pier**, Chicago, Ill. Conference Hotels: Doubletree Hotel Chicago Magnificent Mile, 300 E. Ohio St., Chicago, IL 60611; phone: (312) 787-6100; fax: (312) 787-6259; single/double: \$209. Please inform the hotel that you are with the Illinois Library Association (ILA) Annual Conference; reservations must be made by September 7, 2008. Hilton Garden Inn, 10 E. Grand Ave., Chicago, IL 60610; phone: (312) 595-0000; fax: (312) 527-1989; single: \$209; double: \$229. Please inform the hotel that you are with the Illinois Library Association (ILA) Annual Conference; reservations must be made by August 22, 2008. See preliminary program in the June 2008 *ILA Reporter*. Register online at www.ila.org/events/.
- 27–October 4** **Banned Books Week**. For additional information, see <http://ala/oif/bannedbookweek>.

OCTOBER 2008

- 2–3** **Reaching Forward South Conference for Support Staff**. This conference theme is “Library Support Staff: A True Treasure” and registration is \$65. For further information, visit the Web site www.reachingforwardsouth.org; contact Kim Drake at (217) 223-1309 x201 or kdrake@quincylibrary.org.
- 20** **Deadline for December issue of the *ILA Reporter***.

NOVEMBER 2008

- 6–8** **Illinois School Library Media Association Annual Conference**, Chicago Sheraton Northwest, Arlington Heights, Ill. For further information, see <http://www.islma.org/>.
- 7** **iREAD meeting**, 11:00 A.M., Peru Public Library, 1409 11th St., Peru, IL 61354; phone: (815) 223-0229.
- 18–20** **Synergy: The Illinois Library Leadership Initiative 2008**, Hickory Ridge Marriott Conference Hotel, Lisle. For further information, see Illinois State Library Web site <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/>.
- 20** **Family Reading Night is celebrated annually in Illinois on the third Thursday in November**. For further information, see Illinois State Library Web site <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/library/>.

DECEMBER 2008

- 10** **Illinois State Library Advisory Committee**, Illinois State Library, Springfield, Ill.
- 20** **Deadline for February issue of the *ILA Reporter***.

JANUARY 2009

- 11** 2009 ILA Annual Conference program proposals due in the ILA Office.
See <http://www.ila.org/events>.

- 23–28** ALA Midwinter Meeting, Denver, Colo.;
phone: (312) 280-3225;
<http://www.ala.org/>.

FEBRUARY 2009

- 6** iREAD meeting, 11:00 A.M., Peru Public Library, 1409 11th St., Peru, IL 61354; phone: (815) 223-0229.
- 20** Deadline for April issue of the *ILA Reporter*.
- 28** Trustee Forum Workshop, Hickory Ridge Marriott Conference Hotel, 1195 Summerhill Dr., Lisle, IL 60532. Individual attendees will make reservations for the event directly with Marriott Reservations at 800-334-0344. If the individual attendee does not check in, there will be a charge of one night's room rate. Registration form will be in the December 2008 issue of the *ILA Reporter*.

MARCH 2009

- 12–15** Association of College and Research Libraries Fourteenth National Conference, Seattle, Wash. For further information, see <http://www.ala.org/acrl>.

APRIL 2009

- 3** iREAD meeting, 11:00 A.M., Peru Public Library, 1409 11th St., Peru, IL 61354; phone: (815) 223-0229.
- 13–19** National Library Week. Contact ALA Public Information Office, phone: 800-545-2433, ext. 5044/5041; fax: (312) 944-8520; e-mail: pio@ala.org; <http://www.ala.org/>.
- 13–19** Young People's Poetry Week, sponsored by the Children's Book Council, highlights poetry for children and young adults and encourages everyone to celebrate poetry. For more information, contact the Children's Book Council, 12 W. 37th St., 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10018; phone: (212) 966-1990; <http://www.cbcbooks.org/>.
- 20** Deadline for June issue of the *ILA Reporter*.

MAY 2009

- 1** Reaching Forward Conference of Library Assistants, Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, 5555 N. River Rd., Rosemont, IL 60018.
- 11–12** National Library Legislative Day, Washington, DC. The ALA briefing day will be held at the Liaison Capitol Hill, an Affinia Hotel, 415 New Jersey Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20001. ILA has reserved a block of rooms at the Capitol Hill Suites, 200 C St., S.E., Washington, DC 20003; phone: (202) 543-6000; fax: (202) 547-0883; \$249 single, \$269 double, \$289 triple, and \$309 quad, 14.5 percent sales taxes are not included. Room rates include continental breakfast. High speed wired and wireless Internet access are available complimentary within guest suites.

Library Jobline of Illinois

<http://www.ila.org/jobline>



Positions for Librarians and Support Staff

All employer job openings are listed on the ILA Web site (www.ila.org/jobline) for 30 days and the cost is \$100.

JUNE 2009

- 20** Deadline for August issue of the *ILA Reporter*.

JULY 2009

- 9–15** ALA Annual Conference, Chicago; phone: (312) 280-3225; <http://www.ala.org/>.
- 17** iREAD meeting, 11:00 A.M., Peru Public Library, 1409 11th St., Peru, IL 61354; phone: (815) 223-0229.

AUGUST 2009

- 20** Deadline for October issue of the *ILA Reporter*.

- 23–27** World Library and Information Congress: 75th International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) General Conference and Council, Milan, Italy. For further information, see IFLA Web site: <http://www.ifla.org/>.

OCTOBER 2009

- 6–9** ILA Annual Conference at the Peoria Civic Center. Conference hotels: Hotel Pere Marquette, 501 Main St., Peoria, IL 61602; phone: (309) 637-6500 or 800-774-7118; fax: (309) 671-9445; single/double: \$109, plus tax. Price includes complimentary breakfast buffet. Holiday Inn City Centre, 500 Hamilton Blvd., Peoria, IL 61602; phone: (309) 674-2500; fax: (309) 674-8705; single/double: \$103, plus tax.

- 20** Deadline for December issue of the *ILA Reporter*.

- 29–31** Illinois School Library Media Association Annual Conference, Crowne Plaza, Springfield, Ill. For further information, see <http://www.islma.org/>.

NOVEMBER 2009

- 4–8** American Association of School Librarians Fourteenth National Conference and Exhibition, Charlotte, N.C. For further information, see <http://www.ala.org/aasl>.

DECEMBER 2009

- 20** Deadline for February issue of the *ILA Reporter*.

JANUARY 2010

- 15–20** ALA Midwinter Meeting, Boston, Mass.; phone: (312) 280-3225; <http://www.ala.org/>.

FEBRUARY 2010

- 20** Deadline for April issue of the *ILA Reporter*.

MARCH 2010

- 23–27** Public Library Association's Fourteenth National Conference, Portland, Ore.; phone: 800-545-2433, ext. 5PLA; e-mail: pla@ala.org.

APRIL 2010

- 12–18** National Library Week. Contact ALA Public Information Office, phone: 800-545-2433, ext. 5044/5041; fax: (312) 944-8520; e-mail: pio@ala.org; <http://www.ala.org/>.

- 12–18** Young People's Poetry Week, sponsored by the Children's Book Council, highlights poetry for children and young adults and encourages everyone to celebrate poetry. For more information, contact the Children's Book Council, 12 W. 37th St., 2nd Fl., New York, NY 10018; phone: (212) 966-1990; <http://www.cbcbooks.org/>.

- 20** Deadline for June issue of the *ILA Reporter*.

JUNE 2010

- 20** Deadline for August issue of the *ILA Reporter*.

- 24–30** ALA Annual Conference, Washington, D.C.; phone: (312) 280-3225; <http://www.ala.org/>.

AUGUST 2010

- 20** Deadline for October issue of the *ILA Reporter*.

World Library and Information Congress: 76th International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) General Conference and Council, Brisbane, Australia. For further information, see IFLA Web site: <http://www.ifla.org/>.



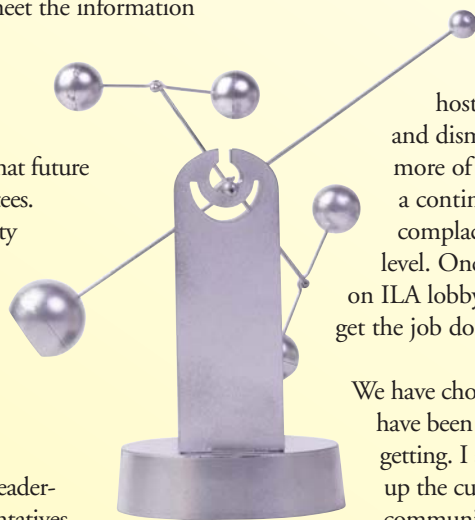
Closing the Gap

The gap is the difference between where libraries are today, and where they must be in the future. Libraries are the first (or, perhaps, last) bastion of freedom; freedom to read and learn without interference from the king, as our founders put it. Freedom of access to information is a touchstone of liberty and root of our democracy. Efforts to contain or restrict or induce fear into the library-patron relationship make us less democratic. Similarly, our liberty is at risk if we do not extend whatever effort is necessary to secure conditions for these freedoms, including appropriate and adequate funding. We have seen in recent years the closing of entire counties of libraries in New York and Oregon. Funding is an immediate concern. Of equal concern is how we will meet the information needs of patrons in the future, and who will determine how (or if) that happens.

Discerning what future will be constructed for libraries and library services, and then building that future is a particular responsibility of directors and trustees. As those elected and entrusted with legal authority to manage libraries on behalf of our patrons, we are responsible for more than simply maintaining the status quo. It is surely part of our mandate, in times of constant change and political uncertainty, to stay ahead of the game by thinking and acting strategically.

It's easy, however, to rely on others to take that leadership role: elected federal, state, and local representatives, association directors and assigns, and those in the library community who more actively volunteer. We come to depend on them to organize advocacy activities, notify us of issues and progress, and make contact with decision-makers. Despite efforts over the years of the state librarian, state library, regional systems, friends in public places, and individuals in our community, we are still the subject of "passive positive regard," as was put to me recently by a library consultant. Librarians are nice but lack any real "push." We're helpful people and not very insistent. We don't make trouble or act out or throw our weight around. And we have learned that this is not enough. Partly as consequence of how we advocate, North Suburban Library System (NSLS) has had flat state grant funding for almost twenty years, with some significant cuts during those two decades in spite of increasing demands for system services. Critical interlibrary deliveries have more than doubled in the last five years, for example. For local libraries, we know from experience that a downturn in the economy is accompanied by an increase in patron usage. Responding to greater need without greater support is tantamount to neglect of this crucial element for the development of literacy among citizens.

Many of us are uncomfortable (mostly because we have little experience) speaking in public or pressing our case with a politician. And yet, author and management consultant Peter Block urges us to move from leadership to citizenship, by which he means less reliance on a chosen few (leaders) to more broadly-based action (as "citizens"). While not an argument against leadership, vesting authority in others may actually reduce the likelihood that we can close the gap between what we have and what we must have, between the present we experience and the necessary future.



In my visits with legislators, at NSLS events, in Springfield and Washington, D.C., across a lunch table, I have found responses to library issues ranging from very friendly to outright hostility. It's tempting to find a glow in the former, and dismiss the latter. To do so, however, promises more of the same. If there is to be a future, let alone a continuing bright one for libraries, we cannot tolerate complacency on the part of our elected officials at any level. Once or twice per year conversations, and reliance on ILA lobbying efforts (as good as Kip is), simply will not get the job done.

We have choices to make. If we are content to do what we have been doing, then we will get what we have been getting. I applaud and admire those who have taken up the cudgel over the years, bringing to our library community the regard and resources we have needed. And we must do more.

I have been thinking of it much like a pendulum, with library trustees and, by extension, patrons. The greater the weight we can be apply, the more compelling ("weighty") the swing. In terms specific to library trustees in Illinois, this means becoming more politically active. I am convinced, more than ever, that the future of library systems in Illinois lies in stronger political action. As part of a movement from advocacy to activism, with its greater sense of urgency and exploration of possibilities, I have asked NSLS board members to be accountable specifically for political action as a function of their service. Whether individually or collectively, I have asked each of them to initiate at least four direct contacts with legislators this year. More than making legislators aware of our concerns (funding, local control, etc.), we will ask how each will contribute directly to supporting libraries, and how he/she will be accountable for that support. We are also interviewing candidates for office, and asking hard questions. We want current and potential legislators to know that we are watching, and will stand at election time with those who respond. **ILA**



STYLE FROM THE STACKS: PROJECT RUNWAY AT ILA

Book jacket meets evening jacket. MARC records meets Marc Jacobs. The library world meets the fashion world!

Are you ready for a library event like no other? Join ILA on Thursday, September 25 for Style from the Stacks in the LaSalle Ballroom of the Doubletree Hotel Chicago Magnificent Mile, 300 East Ohio Street.

The evening begins with cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. Spend some time catching up with your colleagues prior to the centerpiece of the evening – ILA's own version of *Project Runway*! Hosted by Steven Rosengard from *Project Runway: Season 4*, the fashion show will feature library-inspired fashions created by Illinois librarians. After the fashion show, dance the night away with your colleagues!

Event Schedule:	7:00 – 8:00 P.M.	Cocktails and Hors d'oeuvres
	8:00 – 9:00 P.M.	Fashion Show
	9:00 – 11:00 P.M.	Dessert, Drinks, and Dancing

Pre-registration is required for this event. Visit www.ila.org/events to register!



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