

NLN FEATURE

Libraries' mission, future discussed at international seminar

BY LEIGH MONTGOMERY, LIBRARIAN
THE CHRISTIAN SCIENCE MONITOR

The baroque Austrian city of Salzburg is famous as the birthplace of Mozart, for its salt mines and as the setting for the movie "The Sound of Music." Lesser known is that since 1947 it has been home to the Salzburg Seminar, a unique educational opportunity held periodically throughout the year. Conceived as an intellectual Marshall Plan to help rebuild war-torn Europe, it continues to bring together professionals from many countries—often nations who have been in conflict with one another—to convene for a week of global dialogue.

Fifty-seven information professionals from over two dozen countries gathered to discuss the challenges and opportunities worldwide for libraries, to rethink institutional functions and to renew civic and social purposes at the Salzburg Seminar, "Libraries for the 21st Century" held October 23-30, 2004.

Susan Fifer Canby (National Geographic Society), Lu-Ann Farrar (*Lexington Herald-Leader*), Marion Paynter (*The Charlotte Observer*), Susann Rutledge (*BusinessWeek*), Barbara Semonche (The Park Library at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill), and I were the fortunate recipients of Knight Fellowships to attend this Seminar, representing more than half the U.S. contingent. Altogether, news librarians comprised 12% of the attendees.

The meeting was held at the beautiful Schloss Leopoldskron, a rococo palace built in 1736 by the Prince Archbishop of Salzburg Leopold Anton Freiherr von Firmian. In 1918 the Schloss was sold to Max Reinhardt, Europe's most famous theater



Salzburg Seminar participants (L-R): Barbara Semonche, Leigh Montgomery, Susann Rutledge, Lu-Ann Farrar, Marion Paynter and Susan Fifer Canby

director and the co-founder of the Salzburg Music Festival. During World War II, the Schloss was confiscated by the Nazi government as "Jewish property." After the war, it was returned to the Reinhardt family, and Reinhardt's wife donated the property to the Salzburg Seminar for its permanent home. It would become the outdoor setting and interior inspiration for the 1965

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KATHRYN PEASE

News Division members certainly are players in the global community. Not only do we have NewsLib members in approximately 30 countries, but we also have Division members who travel overseas performing a wide variety of duties. Some have provided community-needs assessments to rural libraries in Eastern Europe. Others have conducted Internet training in Bolivia, Poland, China and the Philippines. Still, others were selected to meet with colleagues from around the world to discuss libraries in the 21st century.

Since SLA's annual conference is in Toronto this year, I thought an international issue might be in order. Besides the conference advance, **Amy Disch** talks to Danish news librarian, **Aase Andreassen**. **Jeanie Straub** and her colleagues at Emporia State University discuss rural libraries, politics and the press in Romania, while **Leigh Montgomery** shares highlights of a Salzburg Seminar on challenges facing libraries worldwide. I knew our members were talented, but who would have guessed they could lead a "Sound of Music" sing-along?

On the home front, **Angelica Cortez** explores change in the new year; and for your consideration, we've listed this year's Division Cabinet nominees.

Enjoy the issue.

New Members

September 2004-January 2005

Elyn Blackman
Student
Columbia, SC

Carol Bursack
The Forum
Fargo, ND

Kelli Cornforth
Globe and Mail
Toronto, ON

Theresa Donahue
Student
Rosemont, PA

Molly Eger
Student
New York, NY

Matt Gibson
Bass, Berry & Sims
Nashville, TN

Jacqueline Goins
Student
Lexington, KY

Dyanna Gregory
Student
Champaign, IL

Sara Hayes
Student
Austin, TX

Anne Holcolmb
Kalamazoo Gazette
Kalamazoo, MI

Kathy Kerrihard
San Francisco Chronicle
San Francisco, CA

Mary Anne Klasen
Student
Hudson, OH

Sarah Mason
Student
Boston, MA

Teresa MacGregor
LexisNexis
St. Joseph, MO

John Michaud
The New Yorker
New York, NY

Sharon Mosenkis
NBC Universal
Information Center
Fair Lawn, NJ

Ander Murane
Rocky Mountain News
Denver, CO

Katherine Pospisil
Student
Chagrin Falls, OH

Davenport Robertson
National Institute of
Environmental Health Sciences
Research Triangle Park, NC

Joan Schopf
Arapahoe Library District
Smoky Hill
Centennial, CO

Craig Schulin
Free-Lance Star Publishing Co.
Fredericksburg, VA

Katharine Schopflin
BBC
London, UK

Bert Solivan
Fox News
New York, NY

George Strawley
Student
New Brunswick, NJ

Janis Tyhust
George Fox University
Newberg, OR

Karen Van Rossem
Scholastic Inc.
New York, NY

Lydia Wrobel
Student
Buffalo, NY

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR



BY JENNIFER SMALL
EVERT

As of January 2005, News Division membership stands at 676. For the past several years, we've seen a steady decline in our membership numbers. In fact, we haven't had more than 800 members since 2000. This downturn in membership corresponds with similar declines for other divisions and for SLA as a whole. I'd like 2005 to be a year that the Division focuses on membership, for the recruitment and retention of new members is crucial to our continued success. Some of the questions to ponder: Why are we losing members? What can we do to add value to a News Division membership? What can each current member do to help with recruitment?

Some of you may be interested in what we are doing now. Currently, **Alice Pepper**, our Membership Committee chair, does an excellent job of introducing new members to the Division. When a new member signs up with SLA, Alice sends out a letter of introduction, a membership directory and instructions for using the News Division Web site, the online edition of NLN and NewsLib. The Membership Committee, however, has been a committee of one. At last year's board meeting, we talked about adding people to Membership so that it would become an actual committee. I think that this is the year to do that. If anyone out there has an interest in getting involved in this effort, please let me or Alice know.

Over the past year, the board has brainstormed several ideas for recruiting new members. Some of these ideas would have to be done in an organized fashion by our Membership Committee—but some are things you can do on your own as well:

- ❖ Take advantage of recruitment campaigns which SLA sponsors. In December, for example, they sponsored the Member-Get-A-Member Campaign complete with fun prizes like free conference registration and PDAs.
- ❖ Reach out to library schools. There are a lot of students out there who may be interested in news librarianship but they've never been exposed to the News Division. Do you have a library school in your community? Does the school offer a special libraries class? If so,

maybe you can get on the speaking schedule to talk about news libraries and the benefits of membership in SLA. If not, have an open house at your library and invite interested students.

- ❖ When you hold regional programs, make an extra effort to invite librarians from smaller papers and media outlets.
- ❖ Talk to people who are no longer members and ask them why they left. This information gives us valuable insights into what we could possibly do better.
- ❖ Establish outreach programs to journalism organizations (ASME, ASEE, etc.) about the value of employing news librarians/researchers.
- ❖ Partner with organizations like Poynter, IRE and NICAR.

Recruitment is only one piece of the puzzle. We also need to focus on retention. For this, we have to ask ourselves the hard questions: What value does or can the News Division bring to our day to day work lives? Does membership have benefits that are worth the price of our dues?

To bring value, we must continue to offer strong professional development programs at both the regional and national level. I think the regional news librarian groups are vital to our recruitment and retention efforts. These programs are often more accessible to those who don't have the budget to travel to an annual conference. Perhaps the Division should work to increase the number of regional workshops offered. If you live in an area where there is not a regional group, you could think about forming one. The annual conference is another excellent example of the benefits of News Division membership. Where else can you find six days worth of programming that are focused on the workings of a news library? **Denise Jones** is in the process of planning a great program in Toronto and **Jim Hunter** has put together two more exceptional CE courses.

In addition to professional development opportunities, the Division also needs to start

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Schloss Leopoldskron

Libraries' mission, future discussed at international seminar

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film "The Sound of Music," though filming was not permitted inside, as a Seminar was taking place. And of course, it has a magnificent library, complete with secret stairway. Shelves that once held Goethe and libretti are now filled with books about foreign policy, sociology and technology.

Faculty for this Seminar included: Martin Gomez of the Urban Libraries Council; Paul LeClerc of the New York Public Library; Kay Raseroka, president of IFLA and library director at the University of Botswana; Chris Rusbridge of the University of Glasgow; and Sohair Wastawy of the Library of Alexandria, Egypt. Coordinators of the Seminar were Dr. Alberta Arthurs, principal of Arthurs.us, and William Simpson of the University of Manchester, UK.

Over the course of the week many topics were addressed in lectures, followed by intensive group discussion. Issues included information literacy (and illiteracy), which librarians in all disciplines have found a niche in expertise, as well as training users to navigate through the chaotic, unindexed Internet. Another recurring topic throughout the week was tension of local heritages within the world community, which includes the need to preserve indigenous culture, oral traditions and knowledge against the pressures toward working in English with commercial interests. In addition, attendees were encouraged to view 'nonusers' as potential users of library services, including audiences outside of the tradition of reading books, which is not universal.

Other topics included the increasing expectation for libraries to compete for resources and demonstrate accountability. Related to that issue is the need to be engaged in public policy: libraries must be advocates for equitable access at the point of service and link the library's mission to

freedom and democracy. This later point would emerge later in Mr. LeClerc's talk on successful fundraising for libraries, which he strongly encouraged attendees to emphasize in their capital campaigns.

Attendees expressed high interest in the media's role in promoting the right to read, the freedom to learn and how to put attention on what libraries are doing. The news librarians collaborated in drafting tips for Seminar fellows toward developing successful partnerships with the media. A number of these came from NewsLib after Marion Paynter called for suggestions on the listserv that week, including asking yourself, "Why should anyone care?" and pointing out to journalists how your news will have an impact, be useful or be interesting to the community.

The Seminar was an affirming opportunity to converse with librarians from many different settings and cultures, yet to discover that all 57 of us shared the same passion for our field and communities.

Barbara Semonche summarized some of the learning that took place outside the classroom setting: "A librarian from South Africa declared that she wanted me to be her mentor. I was deeply touched and honored and I accepted." She also noted a number of cultural differences: "From an Egyptian library director I learned that there is no word in her language for 'professional.' From a librarian in Vietnam, I discovered that retirement for female librarians was mandatory at age 55; it was 60 for the men. One of our Chinese fellows described the strict adherence to the seniority system governing promotions."

After the Seminar ends, the fellows' work continues through the connections and friendships made in and out of the lecture hall, as well as over the piano on the last evening, where the Schloss parlor was filled with the sound of librarians singing to Lu-Ann Farrar playing "Sound of Music" favorites on the Bosendorfer

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PEOPLE



BY JENNIFER O'NEILL

On the Move

The *San Francisco Chronicle's*, **Judy Canter** retired after a long career in news librarianship in October 2004. Prior to becoming the *Chronicle's* library director, Judy had been head librarian at *The San Francisco Examiner* before the two papers merged.

Toby A. Lyles, formerly a news researcher at *The News & Observer* (Raleigh, NC), is now a news researcher at *The New York Times*. You'll see her credit line on the A1 story, "Ruling is Awaited on Death Penalty for Young Killers," by Adam Liptak, along with Tom Torok and **Margot Williams**. Toby was one of the winners of the Special Libraries Association Diversity Leadership Development Award for 2003.

Theresa Moore was promoted from news researcher to executive producer at Tampa Bay's Channel 10. She will be overseeing the Web site as well as newsroom research until she gets some people trained.

Gay Nemeti, library manager at *The Miami Herald*, has retired to her beach home in Melbourne Beach, Florida to begin a new life of longboarding and culinary classes. However, she will continue to work with *The Herald*, where she says she grew up, as a consultant and as contest editor.

There have been several changes at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Among them:

Leone Earls was appointed operations manager of Libraries, Archives and Documentation. She had been head of the Reference and Design Libraries.

Michele Melady, who was acting manager of the Reference Library since November 2003, was appointed permanently to the position in October 2004.

Ty Grundig, a graduate of the University of British Columbia, was hired as a senior librarian in the Reference Library.

Awards & Acknowledgements

Amy Disch received her Master of Arts degree in library and information studies from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in a ceremony on December 19th. Currently she is an assistant in the library of the *Wisconsin State Journal* and *The Capital Times*.

Vicky McCargar, associate technology editor for the *Los Angeles Times*, had an article in the Fall 2004 issue of *The Moving Image* (*The Journal of the Association of Moving Image Archivists*, vol. 4, no. 2). It's called "News That Moves: Accessioning Video for Newspaper Archives," and it's about the ins and outs of archiving video footage shot by newspapers for their Web sites.

Margaret Neu, information services editor for the *Corpus Christi Caller-Times*, received the E.W. Scripps President's Club award for her coordination of the newspaper's literacy campaign in 2004.

Cheers to **Leigh Montgomery** of *The Christian Science Monitor* Library who taught a session on Computer-Assisted Reporting as part of a journalism apprenticeship done through Citizen Schools. It's the third apprenticeship *The Monitor* has done through the Boston-based program, which was started by a journalist, to connect students (usually in urban schools) and companies for after-school learning opportunities. Leigh says, "We had them all in front of computers and told them we were going to rocket them right past middle and high school, college, and right into journalism school—if they were lucky enough to even have this in j-school—and taught them about finding stats and backgrounding Web sites and finding experts. It WAS a lot of work but it was hugely satisfying."

Jennifer O'Neill, library director at *The Florida Times-Union*, received a first place citation of special achievement for her research on a Sunday A1 centerpiece,

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Danes deliver a decade of service



BY AMY DISCH

Politiken Newspapers, headquartered in Copenhagen, Denmark, publishes two daily newspapers, Politiken, a broadsheet which began in 1884 and Ekstra Bladet, a tabloid whose first issue appeared in 1904. The papers' original parent company, Dagbladet Politiken, was founded in October 1884.

The Library of Politiken Newspapers was established in 1994 and is managed by head librarian **Aase Andreasen**. The library celebrated its tenth anniversary in November 2004 and marked the occasion with the production of a 12 page "festschrift" or celebratory publication, as well as a staff reception which included cake and wine.

The library's reference collection is comprised of between 5,000 and 6,000 books, 30 Danish and foreign newspapers and approximately 100 journals and news-related magazines. Clip files spanning the years 1940 to 1974 and microfilm of both papers beginning from their inceptions are also available. The papers' stories from 1975 to the present are available electronically through the Infomedia database. Andreasen notes that, "Today this is the biggest database in Denmark," indexing not only Politiken Newspapers' titles, but various other newspapers and magazines as well.

Archiving of the papers is entirely handled by an outside company rather than the library staff. Andreasen says this is the main difference she sees between their library and its American counterparts. "We have respect for that job



Politiken Library staff (L-R): Aase Andreasen, Gitte Ronberg, Michaela Rosendal, Gertrud Baun and Jutta E. Jensen.

and it is very, very important, but we are happy that it's done by someone else."

The library also provides access to several Nordic databases, as well as to Factiva, Dialog and Genios. Selective newspaper and magazine titles are also available electronically. There is a fairly even mix of print and online information sources. According to Andreasen, "We still buy reference books in print but publications such as annual reports, investigations and some statistics are no longer represented in printed editions but only via the Web."

Andreasen says that the library's main priorities are "doing research for journalists and answering questions from the public." All members of the library's staff participate in these two important functions. A variety of other tasks are evenly distributed among staff members. They include purchasing books and

other materials, writing for the library's newsletter, creating and maintaining databases and an intranet, performing surveys, participating in computer-assisted reporting projects, writing "searching tips" articles and compiling quiz questions for the Politiken newspaper, training new employees in Internet and database research and other administrative duties.

A particularly interesting facet of the library's work is its 85-year-old tradition of answering questions from the public. The staff accepts questions via telephone Monday through Friday between 2 p.m. and 6 p.m. and also accepts queries through e-mail. On a typical day, between 40 and 50 questions are answered, and on Saturdays six questions and their corresponding answers are published in Politiken.

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BY ANGELICA CORTEZ

Happy New Year! Many of us are likely making promises for a fresh start, whether it's shedding a few pounds, paying off debt or other personal goals. I don't usually take a part in these resolutions, but this year I definitely feel like change is coming.

I recently opened the latest issue of *Information Outlook* and was very pleased and excited about the opening column by the honorable Ethel M. Salonen, president of SLA. She discusses the resistance many recent MLS graduates receive when seeking employment and encourages librarians to embrace these new professionals and appreciate what they have to offer. Discussion is often the first step in solving the problem, which is why I was so excited that a leader addressed this issue.

Change is inevitable. One of the reasons I became so interested in becoming a librarian is because I truly admire how the profession has adapted to the rapid technological changes that have arrived. Searching the Internet and online databases, developing Web sites and blogging are all areas where librarians have been on the front lines. Yet, there still seems to be a bit of resistance to change in the library profession.

PEOPLE

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"Who's Coaching our Kids? Flawed System Allows Volunteers with Violent Past to Slip Through," by Matt Galnor. Using public records, Matt and Jennifer examined the backgrounds of 2,000 Jacksonville youth sports coaches. In response to the story, Jacksonville Mayor John Peyton said it was "intolerable" that the city's background system was apparently not working. He ordered his staff to investigate city procedures for conducting background checks on youth coaches, which led to changes in their screening procedures.

I hope that this resistant stance will eventually adjust to one of acceptance. With intelligent and articulate leaders such as Ms. Salonen and Rachel Singer Gordon discussing the need to adapt to the new entries into the profession, I have faith that this discussion will lead to the beginning of increased diversity in the profession.

So who wants to be a news librarian? I do, and as I've learned through writing of my struggles to enter the profession, many others like me do as well. I'm very pleased to share that I have recently accepted a full-time position with *The Palm Beach Post*. I'm grateful, excited, nervous, happy and anxious all at the same time.

Indeed, change is coming. With the new year, let's all welcome whatever changes come our way. A new year, a new job, a new place to call home... I'm definitely ready for the changes coming ahead. Are you ready?

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Danes deliver a decade of service

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Those that run in the paper also appear in the Infomedia database, enabling staff to “reuse the most popular and difficult questions in an easy way.” Andreasen cites this interaction with the public as being “good PR for the newspaper.”

In addition to Andreasen, the library’s staff includes one part-time and three full-time librarians, as well as one part-time library clerk. Prior to being appointed head librarian, Andreasen spent 15 years working as a reference librarian in a public library and six years working as the “Politiken Information” (the newspaper’s telephone service) librarian. Andreasen says that for a new hire, “The skills we are looking for today are the abilities to do research in a talented way, to market the skills of librarians, to train and cooperate with journalists and to both create and use computer-assisted reporting tools.”

The library is open between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m. Monday through Friday. Duties performed during a typical day include locating background information and facts for stories, editing chronologies or “fact boxes” and attendance at a morning editorial meeting. The staff also spends time updating the library’s intranet content with new magazine articles and new information on topic areas of current interest.

The library’s marketing efforts are demonstrated through frequent intranet updates, participation in staff meetings, the publication of a monthly newsletter and “trying to be where things happen.” The staff also gives all new journalists a tour and introduction to the library and its services. Andreasen notes that the notion of marketing yourself and your library wasn’t something that was taught or emphasized when she attended library school. “What we did-



Gertrud Baun staffs the telephone service desk for the public.



Journalists celebrate the library’s tenth anniversary.

n’t learn at that time was how to market yourself and your skills, thereby promoting librarians and their competencies.”

In the future, Andreasen foresees “journalists performing more and more of the research for their stories themselves. But I think we have an important job to do—compiling information resources for them in a smart and systematic way. We also

have to be proactive in our information gathering practices so that needed materials are available before a request is made.” She adds that while “I don’t think our company will add librarians to our staff, I also don’t see our numbers being reduced because I believe that our library is highly valued and appreciated.”

Nominations for Division Board announced

CHAIR-ELECT



JIM HUNTER

I have managed *The Columbus Dispatch* Editorial Library since 1974. Our staff now consists of seven librarians—six have an MLS.

I have always had a keen interest in archiving issues and technology projects of all kinds. I began electronic text archiving at *The Dispatch* in 1985, digital image archiving in 1992 and intranet operations in 1999. Now, several systems later and much wiser, we operate a large image archives, two text archives and the editorial intranet. The second text archive is a local commercial text archive site, which is actually profitable.

We are now working with IBM's new archive system, NICA, which includes images, graphics and PDFs. The text archive will be transferred to NICA in early 2003.

I also provide extensive support for Computer Assisted Research & Reporting projects (CARR), including identifying and acquiring public record data sets, importing data and teaching reporters how to analyze data using Excel, MAS ACCESS, SPSS and SAS software. Much of this work finds its way onto the intranet site, which the library created and continues to run. We currently have over 42 million public records on the site. I also have managed *The Dispatch* political polling operation since 1982.

Teaching journalists to be more proficient users of information technology is one of our greatest challenges.

My most satisfying accomplishment has been the creation of highly qualified professional library staff.

TREASURER



PATTI GRAZIANO

I have been the News Research Center director at *The Plain Dealer* (Cleveland, Ohio) since 1982. Prior to that I was the assistant head librarian. Under my supervision the News Research

Center has made the transition from a clips and photo library to a more proactive, computerized information center which has an electronic archiving system, news researchers in the newsroom and offers a variety of database training.

My involvement with the Special Libraries Association has been at both the local and the News Division levels. I chaired the first News Division silent auction as well as the election ballot committee for the division. On the local level I have chaired the advertising and public relations committees and the continuing education seminar for the Cleveland Chapter of SLA.



PETER JOHNSON

In 1985, after a 10-year stint in newsroom and wire service environs, I returned to graduate school and earned my MLS. In 1987 I joined news librarianship as a researcher in the Editorial Library of the *Los Angeles Times* and never looked back.

After 12 years in news research, I moved to the library's electronic archiving group, where we manage the content of the *Times'* text, photo and graphics databases. Soon after that move, we migrated to a paginated

archiving system, which resulted in a very different—and much improved—work-flow. Now, instead of getting out at 3 a.m., our archiving team finishes around midnight alongside the newsroom.

My first SLA experience was in 1987, when I attended the Anaheim conference as a recent graduate looking for work. When I visited the News Division suite, someone (**Richard Geiger** probably) talked me into bartending, and I was hooked on the News Division.

It would be 10 years before I got to attend another annual conference. In 1997 **Tom Lutgen** asked me to handle audio-visual planning and support for the News Division sessions in Seattle. I enjoyed the job so much that I did it for subsequent conferences in Minneapolis, Indianapolis and Philadelphia.

For the San Antonio conference, I addressed the Archiving Update session on archiving practices and procedures at the *Times*. Following that, I moderated the Archiving session in Los Angeles, then moderated and spoke in New York and moderated once again in Nashville.

In between I assisted with conference planning and attended the mid-winter meetings in New Orleans and Albuquerque, serving as technology chair for the News Division from 2002-2004, and serving as nominations chair for the 2003-2004 News Division elections.

In New York, I worked with incoming Treasurer **Justin Scroggs** to collect suite fees and with Justin and **Dana Gordon** to help run the silent auction. In Nashville last year, I gave the treasurer's report in Justin's absence, and again I helped collect suite fees at the door, thus increasing substantially the amount collected to defray Division costs.

It has been a pleasure to work with such a dedicated group of industry professionals

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Nominations for Division Board Announced

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for the past 7 years, and I enjoy giving back where—and when—I can. So I'm pleased to be a candidate for News Division treasurer, and I look forward to the opportunity to serve in this new capacity.



DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION/ PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT CHAIR



DANA GORDON

I have been the deputy director of the Newsweek Research Center since 1996, responsible for managing our research intranet, training end users and customizing applications for our staff. I have held previous information professional positions at Bankers Trust, McGraw-Hill and *Business Week*; I got my start in news research as an intern with *New York Newsday*. I cherish the variety of job experiences I've had—each one has contributed in some way to my current work.

I have been active in the News Division as the public relations director and organizer of our annual silent auction over the past few years, and I am also active in the SLA New York Chapter and currently serve as the internship coordinator on the Library Liaison Committee. I have been active at the annual conference, speaking on several panels about intranets and news research.

I am concerned with such ongoing professional development issues as demonstrating our value to management and learning and maintaining skills competencies against the backdrop of our rapidly changing information landscape. Another interest is in developing and working with the so-called “next

generation” of information professionals and end users. On my job I am continually challenged in training nextgen end users whose points of reference and information seeking behaviors are so different from my own. What is the best way to reach them? What can we learn from them? These questions also apply to our relationships with newly minted information professionals as well, and they are questions we should all be concerned about. I look forward to working on these issues with you as your next education director.



CATHERINE KITCHELL

I obtained an art history degree at the University of Virginia, and after a year-long stint working in Santa Fe, NM, I started as a library assistant at the *USA Today* library in 1983. I received my MLS from the University of Maryland in 1986, and a promotion to reference librarian soon followed. In 1989 I moved to Marin County, CA to head the library at the *Marin Independent Journal*, another Gannett newspaper. There, while attempting to clean up a two-year backlog of unclipped newspapers, I momentarily wished for the destruction of the library during the World Series Earthquake (my first). The library was saved, though, the backlog cleared, and I returned to Washington in 1990 to be a reference librarian at the Bureau of National Affairs, Inc. I have remained there ever since, although I have been promoted to senior reference librarian and am also the corporate archivist. In 2001 I took over the editorship of BNA's Directory of State and Federal Courts, Judges, and Clerks, and in 2002 that publication debuted a Web version.

I have been a member of SLA since 1991 and got involved by volunteering to do the People column for *News Library News* in 1995. From 1996 to 1998 I was managing editor of *NLN*. I served as treasurer for the

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Notes from the Chair

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thinking about resources that we can make accessible to members. Are there resource guides, lists of experts, presentations, etc. that could be made available on our Web site to members only? It's easier to justify membership dues to your editor if you can point to specific perks (e.g., resources) that could benefit the entire newsroom.

I hope I've given everyone some things to think about for the next year. When we meet in Toronto, I hope we'll be further along in our efforts to spread the word on the value of the News Division.

Shifting gears just a bit, I'd also like to announce a bit of news. In our efforts to streamline costs for the Division, we would like to stop printing a full run of the News Division Membership Directory. NewsBank generously produces the directory for us each year. If you would still like a paper copy, we will enclose an order request form with the News Division ballot. Otherwise we plan on creating a PDF version of the directory for members only. If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know (Jennifer.Evert@lexisnexis.com) as soon as possible.

Finally, I'd like to close by congratulating the excellent slate of Division office candidates: Chair-Elect: **Jim Hunter**, *The Columbus Dispatch*; Treasurer: **Peter Johnson**, *Los Angeles Times* and **Patti Graziano**, *The Plain Dealer* (Cleveland, Ohio); Director of Education/Professional Development: **Dana Gordon**, *Newsweek* and **Catherine Kitchell**, Bureau of National Affairs. Congratulations to all of these excellent candidates. Don't forget to vote when you receive your ballot!

Romanian Press, Libraries still face steep journey

BY JEANIE STRAUB AND MINDY WHIPPLE
WITH JAMES NYCE, PH.D.
EMPORIA STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION
MANAGEMENT

As part of their MLS program, **Jeanie Straub**, a News Division member, and fellow student Mindy Whipple traveled to Lunca Ilvei, a rural community in the Transylvania region of Romania, to collect qualitative data for a community-needs assessment under Dr. James Nycy of the School of Library and Information Management at Emporia State University. (See <http://slim.emporia.edu/romania>.) Here the three discuss Romanian libraries, the Romanian press and other impressions on topics of interest to the News Division.

JEANIE STRAUB: We spent a good six months reading every peer-reviewed and informal source we could get our hands on, not the least of which was Barbara Semonche's report on her 1996 work in Bucharest for the Freedom Forum's International Library Division fellowship in cooperation with SLA. (See <http://parklibrary.jomc.unc.edu/buchr.html>.) During our preparatory reading, analysis and discussion I had assumed that articles written before 2000 would no longer apply because life would have improved exponentially every year since the fall of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu in 1989. That was not the case at all. While the catastrophic economic conditions Semonche found were probably considerably worse than what we saw, the economy is far more depressed than anything I could have envisioned—so much so that it was almost surreal at times. An article written in the mid-1990s could have been written in 2004. A positive note is that newspapers get read in Romania. Whether Romanians believe what they read, and despite that Romania is criticized for failing to protect its reporters (more than 20 jour-

nalists have been physically attacked in the last 18 months for offenses such as exposing scandals like the mysterious prosperity in the ranks of the ruling Social Democrat Party), at least people are reading those stories. If you leave a Romanian newspaper on a train and others pick it up, you can see that the press has value even if there is deep distrust of official information.

JAMES NYCE: But we saw little printed material in Lunca Ilvei. We also saw few books in the homes we visited.

STRAUB: The lack of printed material was related to a number of issues, not the least of which was money; most people were working a minimum of two jobs, and commodities we take for granted, such as shampoo, were considered luxuries to some. Most people have to choose between necessities and items such as books or newspapers—making the lack of library service in the village terribly significant—and most of the customers we encountered in one bookstore in Bucharest were tourists.

NYCE: University students both buy books and use bookstores as meeting places, almost as if they were cafes. And there were, at least in the university quarter, many bookstores, even in the subway. The situation in rural Romania was quite different.

STRAUB: The contrast between urban and rural areas was notable in other cases as well. In Bucharest people would really speak their minds, especially about the economy and politics. But in Lunca Ilvei everyone was mum about the approaching mayoral election, and I asked one respondent why everyone seemed so disinclined to discuss the mayor or other local aspects of the election. He said no one had the time to discuss politics, as if it was a luxury to discuss politics, and I let it drop.

NYCE: I don't think discussing politics is a luxury to Romanians. And even when one can't afford periodicals, there is still radio and TV.

STRAUB: People seemed to be willing to discuss national or other politics that were not local in nature. Clearly the mayor seemed to be off limits. And regarding the press, one official in Lunca Ilvei said, and this seems to be a common perception among the public as well, that there was not a lot of "good" information in the press before 1989 and that the same was true after. Readers still needed to be skeptical despite the guise of democracy. It is as if Romanians received all the dubious benefits of a market-oriented economy but few of the critical benefits of democracy: Romanian newspapers have the cutout photos as refers on Page 1, and they've got the Internet poll on Page 2. However, the country has a long way to go toward achieving a truly free press (be too good of an investigative reporter and you could be imprisoned or beaten), and very few can afford Internet access. We sought out an Internet café and found a vacant storefront. We eventually found other Internet cafes. Libraries are not only under-funded—at one point the mayor in Lunca Ilvei said if residents wanted a library, they could buy books for themselves—but they are also inaccessible in many cases.

MINDY WHIPPLE: There is also confusion as to what role librarians play in Romania.

NYCE: This has to do with the role librarians had in the old regime. While there was some resistance to the role the former government assigned them, clearly there is a legacy of distrust both about librarians and what librarians provide.

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Romanian Press, Libraries still face steep journey

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Free Press building in Bucharest. Photo: Jeanie Straub

STRAUB: Librarianship is also devalued as an occupation because of the pervasive notion that what librarians do is shelve and retrieve books. Semonche noted that news librarians or news researchers were nonexistent in Romania, and that in fact there was no direct translation for such an occupation. When I visited the press building in Bucharest, a security guard was in charge of access to what was little more than a closet for back copies. Later we discovered that the two librarians in Lunca Ilvei were actu-

ally secretaries that acted as librarians as an afterthought.

WHIPPLE: It all goes back to policy and lack of support for information institutions.

NYCE: And Romanians are skeptical of what the elite say about change, institutions and government no matter what media it is reported in. Again and again we heard comments suggesting Romanians as a people don't see themselves as actors in whatever game is being presented to them. One result is that media consumers tend to be more interested in numbers and counting related to topics such as sports than economic facts and figures. After many

years of Soviet domination, Romanians have a healthy respect for the unreliability of numbers related to public institutions and the common good.

STRAUB: Romanians definitely have a healthy respect—or healthy cynicism—about reported information and the nature of truth. One man asked whether our president orchestrated September 11. That's how little they believe anything they hear or

read; they question everything—at least that which will not get them killed—and they are not at all shy about asking tough questions or leveling criticism regarding the United States. We were asked by a family we interviewed whether Iraq wasn't, as our translator put it, “awfully far to go” to defend our own soil. People tended to be point-blank when asking questions about the United States and U.S. foreign policy. The details about the torture of Iraqi prisoners were starting to break. Iraq made headlines daily.

WHIPPLE: Do you remember the Romanian soldiers on the train? What did they say? They made a choice to join the military to make their lives a little better because jobs are so scarce in Romania. But did they imagine where they would end up? And for whom they would be fighting?

STRAUB: This was May and they were leaving in July for Iraq. My first reaction was to apologize; I said I was sorry that they had to go to Iraq. They told me not to apologize because they were paid well; the military provided a good income, enough that they could buy Winston cigarettes instead of the generics everyone else smokes. One said, “In Iraq it is spaghetti everyday”—spaghetti being a perk. The economy works for few others except for those in power, such as the mayor in Lunca Ilvei.

WHIPPLE: Often we were asked if there were jobs for Romanians in the United States. Almost everyone asked this. I'd like to think we were asked this question because they wanted an encouraging answer to how a market-oriented economy works for us. But often people were leaving their wives and children to work in other countries, and I think that they were giving up on the possibility of employment in Romania. What we saw in the librarian profession is probably true of much of the professions in Romania.

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Toronto: You belong here

As if the multicultural excitement and mild temperatures weren't enough reason to attend this year's SLA conference in Toronto, just take a look at the News Division's programming.

In addition to informative and practical daily sessions and two very interesting CE courses, you won't want to miss touring the *Toronto Star* Library on Saturday or the Thursday luncheon at the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Tuesday's awards banquet, in a castle no less, promises to be as memorable as ever.

If you have any questions on the program, please contact **Denise Jones** at djones@newsobserver.com. For general conference and lodging information, see <http://www.sla.org>.

Come join us!

SATURDAY, JUNE 4

2:00-5:00 - Tour of the *Toronto Star* Library

6:00-12:00 - Networking in Suite

SUNDAY, JUNE 5

8:00-12:00 - Blogging for News: Creating and Managing Weblogs and Newsfeeds CE Course

In this weblog workshop for beginners, the class will be divided into small groups, each using a laptop to create, post to and manage a weblog. Small class size is very desirable to accomplish the objective and provide each attendee with hands-on blogging experience. There will also be an introduction to RSS feeds. Participants are encouraged to bring laptops with wireless capabilities or ethernet cards, if possible.

Speakers: Jessica Baumgart, Harvard University; Liz Donovan, The Miami Herald

1:00-4:00 - Design for News: A Live Tour of Five Newsroom Intranets CE Course

Design for News will explore five newsroom intranets using Virtual Private Networks (VPNs) to gain real time access to these Web sites. Library managers of the presentation Web sites will offer a description and explanation of the hardware and software that supports the intranet and discuss design and usability issues as well as the degree of difficulty involved in creating high-powered intranets. Each intranet webmaster will discuss the technology used, development cycle and plans for future development.

Speakers: Dana Gordan and Madeline Cohen, Newsweek; Mike Meiners, St. Louis Post-Dispatch; Denise Jones, The News & Observer; Liz Donovan, The Miami Herald; Jennifer Ryan, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

5:00 - Board Meeting in Suite

6:00 - Networking in Suite

MONDAY, JUNE 6

7:30-9:00 - Vendor roundtable - public records vendors

Moderator: Leigh Poitinger

A chance to meet and talk with the public records vendors. How is the data compiled? Where does it come from? How do vendors ensure accuracy—or do they? What is “credit header” data? What’s on the horizon for privacy concerns?

11:30-1:00 - Mary Ellen Bates - The Next Information Revolution, and Our Role as Revolutionaries

Looking ahead at the impact of technology and the Web on our profession and how we can thrive on this change and turn challenging situations into new opportunities for professional growth.

3:30-5:00 - News Division business meeting

7:00 - Silent Auction and Networking in Suite

Sponsor: ProQuest

TUESDAY, JUNE 7

7:30-9:00 - Top Ten Tips: Ten ideas to make your library more effective

Moderator: Judy Grimsley

Great ideas that your colleagues have used to improve their libraries. Ten of the best are shared with you.

11:30-1:00 - Managing Copyright and Leveraging Revenue in Your News Organization

Moderator: Kathy Foley

A panel of seasoned copyright experts (not lawyers) will discuss copyright issues, including encouraging your newsroom to follow good copyright practices, managing reprint permissions and developing revenue by repurposing editorial content. If your news organization assumes you are an expert on copyright issues, come join the conversation.

Speakers: Sharon Clairmont, Orange County Register; Ginny Everett, The Atlanta Journal-Constitution; Peter Simmons, The New York Times

1:30-3:00 - Gary Price - Searcher extraordinaire

Gary's latest discoveries in Web searching.

3:30 - Board meeting in Suite

6:00 - Awards banquet at Casa Loma

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8

7:30-9:00 - Ratios, Percentages and Statistics!

Oh my!

Moderator: Megan Gallup

Do you have trouble balancing your checkbook? Does looking at Census data give you a headache? You're not alone. As a librarian or information provider you may have assumed that you were done with math when you were done with school. But in a news organization, math skills are more important than ever. Researchers need to know how to calculate ratios and percentages and work with statistics. Come learn (or re-learn) these skills and more, then go back and teach your reporters!

Speakers: Stephen Doig, Arizona State University Cronkite School of Journalism; John Martin, St. Petersburg Times

11:30-1:00 - Enter the Matrix: Social Network Analysis

Moderator: Kathryn Pease

Learn how matrices and graphs can be used to unlock seemingly invisible relationships between people, companies and even terrorist organizations. Learn the concepts and techniques behind SNA. What type of questions should be asked? What type of software should you use? Join panelists as they explain how to create your own “matrix revolution.”

Speakers: Jaimi Dowdell, Investigative Reporters and Editors; Brant Houston, Investigative Reporters and Editors

1:30-3:00 - The Urge to Merge

Moderator: Shira Kavon

Consolidation of graduate library schools and schools of communication, information technology and other disciplines has become a fact of academic life in the 21st Century. Often as a result of these mergers, graduate library programs and journalism schools coexist under the same academic umbrella, a development that should benefit News Division member libraries. Have these mergers helped to build a better-skilled, more news-library-ready MLS holder? If not, have library programs merely become the “silent partner” of the new model graduate programs?

Speakers: Michael Koeing, Palmer School of Information Science of Long Island University; David Spencer, University of Western Ontario

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Romanian Press, Libraries still face steep journey

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NYCE: Librarians also seem to be demoralized about what they and their institutions can do for patrons. It was unclear in what sense conventional LIS terms such as “user-centered” and “service” (almost taken for granted in the United States) would have in a Romanian context.

STRAUB: There was no understanding in Lunca Ilvei of the concept that a public library is universally accessible. And this seemed to be true of all other libraries. Access is restricted. At one point I was walking to the press building in Bucharest and ran into an ex-patriot who thought I was on the way to the press building to gain access to the National Library. Access is an issue.

WHIPPLE: The problem again goes back to the policy-makers. One woman told us she would go to the mayor of the community for agricultural information rather than the library. And when interviewing the mayor we found that he didn't see the library as a priority. That is probably reflective of the nation as a whole.

NYCE: In Romania the entire cultural enterprise regarding what knowledge is and who or how it is determined to be truthful is weak. Consequently, if libraries are transfer points for knowledge and information, they too are regarded as suspect.

STRAUB: A few people in the larger cities reported that they were uncertain whether you needed to buy a library card to gain access. According to Western and even Romanian academics, the public library system is free. But everything seems to be for sale in Romania—even test scores to get a student into the university. You can buy



Library research group taking the preferred mode of transportation in Lunca Ilvei. Photo: Mindy Whipple.

access, test scores, on and on. If it isn't, then you're stuck at the bottom with the other 90 percent of the population for whom the transition is not working. The economy is not in transition at all for many people because they cannot see anything transitioning.

NYCE: There seemed to be an absence of commonly agreed upon facts. Jeanie mentions what free means in reference to a library card. Another example is if you travel station to station by rail in one direction you may get three tickets, but upon your return you may get one ticket for the exact same route. Now this may be relatively petty, but it points to a society where very little is relatively stable. And this is not just a perception of outsiders; Romanians themselves told us much the same.

WHIPPLE: It was difficult to determine if library cards were free. Our translator said that there is a small fee for a library card but that checking materials out was free. I also think that Romanians do see things changing, but only for the Romanian elite. The transition is working for the elite, and, since this small segment of the Romanian popu-

lation also makes policy, things continue to look bleak for those on the bottom. Our interpreter told me the mayor of Lunca Ilvei owned three homes, including a vacation home on the Black Sea.

STRAUB: Most people expressed that they did not have faith that EU membership would improve life in Romania.

NYCE: This view is surprisingly strong in rural Romania. As you mentioned earlier, people we interviewed saw the transition from a planned economy to something like capitalism as really no transition at all. More cynically, they saw the supposed transition much like a play in which the scenery changed but the actors didn't.

WHIPPLE: That is precisely what happened—the scenery changed but the actors did not. Former communist countries that have made a more successful transition such as Hungary, Poland and Ukraine put into office political leaders who were more removed from the former Communist Party. Since 1989, Romania's most powerful political leaders have been former

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Romanian Press, Libraries still face steep journey

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Communist Party members. Why did Romanians allow them to stay in power? Fear of the unknown? Nostalgia? In any case, Romanians sent their leadership a message during the last election when they voted the dominant party out of office. The new leaders will be instrumental in working toward EU accession and the 15 billion Euros that comes with that accession.

STRAUB: Many expressed distrust in the elections, and that goes back to the mostly universal distrust of the system. An example is that after the 1989 revolution, people were unsure for about a week what was really happening—they thought the talk of a revolution might be a ploy. It wasn't until the broadcast of the execution of the former dictator and his wife that it became apparent to everyone that a revolution had occurred. According to one source, Animal Farm was broadcast after that. I asked the same man where the tapes of the execution were kept. He was sure they were somewhere, but he could not identify where they were kept or exactly how a Romanian would be able to access the tapes, and he was an educated man.

WHIPPLE: Access to the videotapes, trust in the government as it transitions and a related mistrust of the EU—Romanians are having a tough time of it. Lack of transparency and lack of open access to knowledge are directly tied to the difficulty in Romania. In the Western world we have long associated libraries with democracy, and there doesn't seem to be that connection in Romania.

STRAUB: I noted real nostalgia among the younger set—say 35 and younger—for life under communism, because Romanians are

worse off financially now than they were under communism. The average wage is about the same—the equivalent of less than \$200—but high inflation has undercut buying power. A 35-year-old hotel security guard in Bucharest put it this way: Before 1989 Romanians did not have the freedom to leave, but they still cannot leave because they don't have the money to leave. That was early in the trip, and it became more and more difficult to encourage people not to lose hope in the transition. It has been interesting to follow the presidential election in Romania, and I look forward to encouraging news resulting from the election of former Bucharest mayor and conservative opposition candidate Traian Basescu as he faces challenges in forming a government from fragmented parliamentary support. One of our subjects I have been in contact with was surprisingly optimistic about both the mayoral elections in his city of Suceava and the presidential elections. He said this of the mayoral elections in a recent correspondence: "In my town the winner was a hardworking and honest man." This same source was one of the few who expressed confidence that integration into the EU would be important for the future success of Romania, and newly elected president Basescu has said his priority is "to form ... a government capable of continuing ... negotiations for Romania to join the European Union." We'll be following these negotiations for Romania with hope.

Romanian libraries: the skinny

According to Romanian librarian Herminda Angheltescu, development of Romanian libraries mirrored development of libraries in Western Europe, from the emergence of monastic and ecclesiastical libraries in the 14th century to the creation of public libraries supporting universal education in the 19th century.

Angheltescu wrote the definitive dissertation, "Public Libraries in Modern Romania: Legacy of French Influences and Soviet

Patterns, 1830-1990," at the University of Texas Austin. She traces a Romania academic library system that gained momentum beginning in 1866. Almost 50 years of Communist Party rule decimated Romanian libraries, which had degenerated into repositories of party propaganda. Library science as a discipline was gutted in 1974 with the closing of the sole library school at the University of Bucharest.

Libraries have continued to suffer under harsh economic conditions since the fall of dictator Nicolae Ceausescu in 1989. The perception that librarians shelve and retrieve books is so pervasive that practicing librarians omit the name of their profession on business cards, according to Angheltescu.

Angheltescu's 1990 figures offer the most reliable recent statistics on Romanian libraries:

- ❖ The public library network consist of Bucharest Municipal Library, 40 county libraries and 2,823 municipal, city, commune and village libraries
- ❖ 43 academic libraries
- ❖ 10,956 school libraries
- ❖ Special libraries, including medical and military libraries, total about 2,908, primarily in Buchrest, but there are no news libraries that could be compared to those in the United States and elsewhere; in fact, there is no direct translation for "news librarian" or "news researcher."

Sources: Angheltescu (2000-2001), Anita Breland (1991-1992) (see <http://web.simmons.edu/~chen/mit/NIT'91/001-bre.htm>), and Barbara Semonche of the News Division (see <http://parklibrary.jom.c.unc.edu/buchr.html>).

Pressure on Romanian press

March 2004: Germany urges Romania to execute sweeping reforms in anticipation of its 2007 European Union admission.

February 2004: Romania bans a Hungarian journalist who had written arti-

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Romanian Press, Libraries still face steep journey

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cles critical of the Hungarian Democratic Union of Romania

December 2003: An international commission condemns eroding press freedom in Romania, citing continuing terrorization of Romanian media workers, including the savage beating of an investigative reporter—the 14th to be physically attacked in 2003. The commission also cites the chilling effect of Romania's extreme penal code as well as the undue influence of business interests on private news outlets.

May 2003: The U.S. Congressional Commission for Security and Cooperation in Europe calls on Romania to cancel current defamation laws to promote freedom of the press.

April 2003: An international report singles out Romania as the only EU candidate without a truly free press, citing routine political meddling and newly adopted legislation restricting access to classified information.

February 2003: The Romanian Defense Ministry refuses access to information on

the use of a Romanian military airfield by the United States.

October 2002: Reporters Without Borders, publishing its first world index, reports that Romania is among the worst offenders in Europe in regards to freedom of the press violations. The index tracks cases of journalists being arrested or killed, censorship, the performance of state monopolies, and media legislation.

Sources: BBC, Deutsche Presse-Agentur, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, Ziua

Sharing the wealth of News Division knowledge through IFLA

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) advances library and information services worldwide, including international cooperation and resource sharing. Reviews of IFLA annual conferences by SLA members are available on the SLA site.

❖ For information on individual or institutional membership in IFLA, see <http://www.ifla.org/III/members/index.htm>.

❖ To read about the Newspapers Section of IFLA, see <http://www.ifla.org/VII/s39/pr1/achiev.htm>.

❖ SLA offers a comprehensive list of other international library associations at <http://www.sla.org/content/resources/info/resour/reftool/librassn.cfm>.

Libraries' mission, future discussed at international seminar

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piano. A listserv was set up for the attendees by the Seminar staff for the librarians to stay in contact. Since that time photos, recollections and articles have been shared. "I wonder if the Salzburg Institute has any idea of what they have unleashed," said

Paul Callister, library director at Bloch Law Library, University of Missouri Kansas City. "Librarians are experts at networking and expect our group to continue and expand its work in perpetuity."

For more information about the Salzburg Seminar, see <http://www.salzburgseminar.org>.

Susan Fifer Canby, Marion Paynter, Susann Rutledge and Barbara Semonche contributed to this report.

Toronto: You belong here

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3:30-5:00 - Research Management Trends: Getting ahead of the questions

Moderator: **Donna Scheeder**

What happens when you combine research management software, including virtual reference applications, and knowledge management techniques in order to respond to the conflicting demands of newsroom research projects? What best practices are colleagues employing to facilitate knowledge sharing among de-centralized research staff? Is the investment worth it? The speakers for this session will attempt share techniques, evaluations of software and provide time for best practice sharing among the attendees.

THURSDAY, JUNE 9

11:30-2:00 - Lunch on the 10th floor of the CBC Building.

The speaker will be Evan Solomon, co-host of CBC News Sunday and host of Hot Type, a book show in which he interviews fiction and non-fiction writers. Lunch will be followed by tours of CBC libraries. This tour will be handled by the News Division and pre-registration will be required. Lunch and tour will be limited to 50 people and cost will be \$20. Watch NewsLib for details on signing up.

ELECTIONS

Nominations for Division Board Announced

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DC Chapter from 1999 to 2002 and as treasurer for the News Division from 2001 to 2003. I received the DC/SLA Board of Directors Award 2001-2002 for my work as treasurer for the DC Chapter.

I am interested in running for education director because, as we all know, trends in the news library field are changing exponentially, and it is imperative for all of us to stay as current as possible. Holding meaningful CE classes at the SLA conference is an efficient, relatively low-cost way to provide members with the latest thinking in our field.