

NLN FEATURE

Yowza! Two Transformative Years in the Energetic Life of The Associated Press News Research Center

BY JENNIFER FARRAR
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The Associated Press is the world's largest newsgathering organization, with 4,000-plus employees serving more than 120 countries. Researchers at the AP's News Research Center are an integrated, powerful part of the news process, working in partnership with editors and reporters, AP bureaus, and with our graphics, online, television and photography divisions. This integral coordination has not always been the case. Here's the story of how we made the change, and of our recent good fortune at receiving one of the AP's most prestigious honors, the 2006 Oliver S. Gramling Achievement Award for staff excellence.



Seated, left to right: Randy Herschaft, Jennifer Farrar, Rhonda Shafner and John Parsons. Standing, left to right: Susan James, Julie Reed, Judy Ausuebel, Barbara Sambriski, Lynn Dombek and Monika Mathur.

THE STAFF

All of the current NRC staff, located at AP headquarters in New York, were hired within the past five years, with the exception of investigative researcher Randy Herschaft and senior researcher Susan James. Herschaft, who just celebrated his 20th year with the AP, specializes in busi-

ness research, FOIA requests, and military and public records. He was a member of the AP investigative reporting team that won a Pulitzer Prize in 1999 for "The Bridge at No Gun Ri," a package of stories reporting the mass killings of South Korean civilians by American troops at the start of the Korean War. James came to the AP in

1990 with 19 years of experience, including five years in research labs at Pillsbury and 11 years at the Institute for Electrical and Electronics Engineering (IEEE.) She became the AP's Research Manager in 2000, and was promoted to Deputy Director in 2005.

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LEIGH MONTGOMERY

It is a month into autumn, and with this season a new venture for me: editor of your publication, the News Library News. Editor's columns seem to require that one write what is going on outside of their window at some point, so here is a glimpse of October in Boston: it is crisp and cool, the showy red and orange foliage has fallen away and the brown oak leaves remain on the trees. This is actually my favorite part of fall: for me it is all about the oaks. They are resilient, and remain on the tree well into November. Though the 'leaf peepers' that travel through New England are attracted by the brilliant colors of the maples and the brighter trees, they should pause to see the subtler beauty of the tan oak leaves in the sun - especially in contrast against a gray sky. And after all, if it weren't for the oak leaves, the landscape would be entirely different.

This issue is published at a very challenging time for the news industry. Editors and news executives everywhere are looking for practical applications to help our news enterprises, and we're all trying to identify what's working, shed what's not working - and worrying a great deal about what's next.

I admit that I was concerned over the summer: with all of the demands on small library staffs in an industry in transition, with one of the most demanding production schedules in the world - how on earth will people find time to document what's happening with their libraries?

I needn't have worried. I've been so deeply impressed by what poured forth into my e-mail box. In this issue are stories of our colleagues who are developing new tools and databases not only for their

“In this issue are stories of our colleagues who are developing new tools and databases, not only for their staffs - but for other users.”

staffs - but for other users. There are many stories of accomplishments both recognized and rewarded. Multiple mentions of innovations in technology for news applications. There is an article by a librarian who sought to gain and share knowledge about a similar archiving system at a newspaper across the ocean. A story about the revival of a Poynter Institute seminar - training emerging talent in the news library profession - as well as an article about news librarians in front of the classroom themselves. And a profile of a librarian who recalls working in the news over four decades - and still loves her job.

At this point, news employees everywhere are looking for some good news. If I may humbly but practically suggest: a great deal may be found in this issue. I sincerely hope you enjoy this publication as much as I've truly enjoyed editing and reading it - it's a heartening compilation of stories - enduring, inspiring, resilient. Our own oak leaves.

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NOTES FROM THE CHAIR



BY DENISE JONES

PARTING SHOT AS THE GAVEL PASSES...

It is hard to believe that my term as your News Division chair is over. It has been an honor to serve you. My role seemed easy because so many great people worked with me. And work you did! Thanks go to all the division members I called upon during the past year and a half. I appreciate your willingness to help and the opportunity I had to get to know each of you better.

New officers will officially begin their terms on January 1. (If you haven't already done so, please be sure to vote!) Since SLA offices no longer change July 1, we did not have the usual "ritual" at annual conference

of handing over the gavel to the incoming chair. But now it is time for Jim Hunter to take his gavel! Look, Jim: it is on its way to you now (see photo)!

Before closing, I would like to

commend Dana Gordon for assembling an excellent educational program for news researchers - the News Research Academy. Fourteen of our colleagues attended this three-day program at the Poynter Institute in September. The program was aimed not at research managers and directors but at those researchers who are newer to the field. What a great way for news researchers to meet others, who do the same things they do, and to learn new skills together. Dana gathered an impressive group of speakers and sessions and the comments I received afterwards were glowing. I hope the News Division will continue to offer a variety of educational opportunities to its members.

As your former chair I still look forward to being part of the News Division. The news industry is changing and at times the future may look uncertain. I urge you all to stay active in the Division so we can work

“It has been an honor to serve you. My role seemed easy because so many great people worked with me.”



Jones passing on the gavel.

together to manage - and survive - these changes. I'm sure Jim Hunter and, later, Justin Scroggs, are already planning ways to help us do just that.

Again, my thanks to all of you who helped make my tenure as your chair a truly enjoyable and enlightening time for me.

Our Division is fortunate to have so many dedicated and skilled members.

News Division CE in Denver

BY DANA GORDON

Join us for the upcoming CE course in Denver at the SLA Conference. The class will be held on Sunday, June 3 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The course, entitled "News Researcher's Tech Toolbox '07: Tools for Turning Data Into Stories," will take a techy turn and look at some of the projects our colleagues have developed. You will get an overview of some key tools being used—particularly open source tools like MySQL, PHP, and Python—for creating dynamic web pages and automating data collection. We'll also look at Wikis in the newsroom. The goal of the session is for attendees to learn what's out there and how news research departments are participating or can participate in this growing area of story development.

Hope to see you there!

GOING GLOBAL: Librarians in two countries share knowledge about an archiving system in common

BY DEBORAH CHARLES
THE ROYAL GAZETTE AND MID-OCEAN NEWS

*Curiosity killed the cat
But satisfaction brought him back*

Source: O. Henry: *Schools and Schools* (1909)
[First recorded use].
<http://www.answers.com/topic/curiosity-killed-the-cat>

Margrethe's Story

Meet Margrethe Mose, Manager of Electronic Archives and the staff that work at *Borsen - The Danish Business Daily*, located at 19 Montergade DK-1116 in Copenhagen, Denmark. Both Mrs. Mose's Library and the Library in *The Royal Gazette Library* share a common denominator. They both use BRS Search, which is the Archiving Library software produced by a company called SAXoTECH. SAXoTECH also produces a series of software packages in the SAXoPRESS Publishing System which comprise our Editorial system. Namely, SAXoBasis which is our frontend system, the software the reporters use when they are creating or entering a story into the system for the first time coupled with pagination software which uses QuarkXpress, and NetNews which is our web-based software system.

Being a member of SLA's News Division and a regular attendee at the SLA Conferences I have visited and seen many Newspaper Libraries from the east to west coast of the United States and Canada. However, this was an opportunity not to be missed - to take my exposure and knowledge to a global level. Margrethe Mose and I met online through Newslib - the News Division Listserv about 6 years ago. SAXoTECH home base is in Copenhagen, Denmark. I was curious to find out just what the newspaper, publishing and magazine businesses in Copenhagen who used



Left to right: Deborah Charles, News Librarian *The Royal Gazette/Mid-Ocean News*, Margrethe Mose, Manager / Electronic Archives *Borsen*, Virginia Charles (Deborah's Mother) and Pia Oltieng Hausen, Archive Assistant of *Borsen*.

SAXoTECH software thought of it, especially since it was created there? How well they used it, and what they could tell and teach me that I didn't already know? Like the old saying: if they were the shoemakers' children: did they have the best shoes? The Royal Gazette uses BRS Search 4.5, *Borsen* uses BRS Search 9.0 - Livelink Discovery Server. The most current version of the system on the market at this time is R6. How does Mrs. Mose manage to do it all: with or without all the bells-and-whistles that my inquiring mind, as well as others, would love to know?

Mrs. Mose described *Borsen*, a salmon-coloured business tabloid, as the leading newspaper in Copenhagen. They also produce *Borsen Lifestyle Magazine* 14 times a year. They have a staff of approximately 250 people: 60 of which are journalists, the

rest consist of Administration, Archives, Layout, Subscription and Photo Departments etc... They have a circulation of 70,000 daily.

The key to successful archiving is having a staff of 5 along with 2 - 4 Enhancers and Typesetters. The Enhancers prepare the stories in the newspapers by assigning them document numbers and ensuring that the jumps are assigned as well. The typesetters type in information, which gets lost in the transition process of creating the news, placing it on the designated pages and printing it for distribution. Their job is to control the data in a consistent manner.

The Photography Department is responsible for photos, graphs, charts, illustration and any graphic images used in their publication. They enter and archive all their own information.

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PEOPLE



By JENNIFER O'NEILL

As a result of a voluntary retirement offer made to newsroom staff at *The Washington Post*, **Lucy Shackelford** has been named the new Director of Information Services, succeeding **Bridget Roeber**, who took the offer. Since starting her career at *The Washington Post* in 1989, Lucy has been investigative researcher, national researcher and research editor.

Alice Crites will take over Lucy's old position as research editor. Alice has been with the *Post* since 1990 and has been a prominent desk researcher, making a significant research contribution to the 2006 Pulitzer Prize-winning stories about lobbyist Jack Abramoff.

Madonna Lebling was promoted to the national desk as its researcher and **Meg Smith** was promoted to the metro desk researcher.

Sara Pearce has a new job at the *Cincinnati Enquirer* as Information and Research Specialist. It's a brand new title, so she is defining it as she goes. Her main responsibility - at the moment - is to assess the state of their collections both physical and virtual, and to make recommendations for maintaining, archiving and updating. She is also connecting with area libraries to see how to better use their resources and to investigate possible partnerships on digital projects.

The *Cincinnati Enquirer* is creating a "datadesk" that will merge with the library, although the final structure of things is yet to be determined.

Sara is a former features editor and reporter who has worked at papers big and small from the *York Daily Record* to *USA Today*. She also happens to have a Masters in Library and Information Science from Rutgers University.

When she took the position she says one of the first things she did was to join the Special Libraries Association and get on the listserv. I believe she will be a success.

Linda Deitch, assistant library director at *The Columbus Dispatch*, recently became a first-time Mom when she and her husband, Andy Resnik, adopted a little girl from Guatemala. Melanie Elena Resnik was born Jan. 6, 2006, and joined the family in September.

Linda reports that when given a choice of toys or books to play with in her playpen, Melanie always goes straight for the books!

Nathan Rosen, Vice President in the Legal & Compliance Department of Credit Suisse, has been highlighted as a success story for 2006 by *Inside Counsel* magazine in the September issue dedicated to innovators. Out of hundreds of legal departments,

Inside Counsel selected the ten most innovative legal departments in corporate America that developed solutions to common problems. They chose to include one librarian - who happens to be a member of our division - Nathan Rosen.

In addition to helping the business run more efficiently, the article commends Nathan for building bridges between departments and responding to the needs of his clients. See page 56 of the September issue, which can be found at:

<http://www.insidecounsel.com/issues/insidecounsel/pdfs/IC10.pdf>.

After 26 years, **Judy Sall** retired from *The Dallas Morning News*. She says it has been a great ride and that working in a newspaper library has been the best.

Judy thanks everyone who provided information, help and support over the years. And says she will be checking in from time to time on Newslib because she cares. (Or because she doesn't have enough sense to stay away.)

Barbara Semonche reminds us that Judy has been an ardent supporter of news research staff training, especially with Investigative Reporters & Editors boot camps. And that she has been involved with her newspaper's decisions to install a recent frontend system, PCs on news staffs' desktops, and library intranets.

Speaking of Barbara, I'm not sure if anyone saw the post, but after 13 years Barbara Semonche decided it was time to retire as NewsLib list administrator. She signed off by saying, "To say that I've been uplifted by the extraordinary experience of serving for 13 years as NewsLib's list administrator is an understatement. I'm indebted to you for your patience, understanding, generosity, good humor, and brilliance. Collectively you are all, without doubt, the news profession's equivalent of the "brain trust." I salute you all."

Barbara named **Carolyn Edds**, a veteran NewsLib subscriber and currently a news researcher with the *St. Petersburg Times* as her successor. Many of us already know Carolyn. She has been active in News Division programs for over 12 years. She is a native Floridian who returned to Florida recently from Missouri, where she was the Eugene S. Pulliam research director for IRE (Investigative Reporters and Editors) and NICAR (National Institute for Computer-Assisted Research). Earlier Carolyn was a news researcher with the *San Antonio Express-News* and the news research manager at the *Herald-Journal* in Spartanburg, S.C.

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LIBRARIAN BY DAY, PROFESSOR BY NIGHT

News librarians in front of lecture halls and classrooms

BY ELLIE BRISCOE
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC

Whoever said, “Those who can, do; those who can’t teach,” was wayyyyyyy off base.

This semester, for the first time, I’m teaching a course for a local library school: an overview of technical services. This made me think: what are my News colleagues doing?

News Division members definitely “can,” and do, teach at library schools, sharing their expertise to help develop the next generation of professional librarians. Some teach the classes that you’d expect, which parallel the skills or work they do in their libraries:

—**Kate Bird**, News/Graphics Research Librarian at *The Vancouver Sun & The Province*, teaches “Digital Image and Text Collections” at the School of Library, Archival and Information Studies at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver.

—**Anne Mintz**, Director of Knowledge Management at Forbes Inc., taught the online courses at Columbia’s library school for four years.

And some go beyond news-focused skills, to more general courses:

—**John Cronin**, formerly of the *Boston Herald*, was a visiting lecturer and substitute professor at Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science in 1984, 1985, 1992 and 1997, teaching Current Issues in Library Administration and Management of the Corporate Library courses. One of John’s assignments was a professional self-evaluation by each member of the class. “By the end of the term, about a third of the students had seriously altered their professional goals,” he writes. “Teaching gave me the wonderful feeling of being able to discuss what being a librarian is like with people who represented a broad

range of styles from neophytes to long-time pros in many fields who came to librarianship as a final career....The sharing of knowledge contributed to my growth as well as theirs. It’s similar to NewsLib and/or conference in many ways with the amount of knowledge sharing between instructor and class.”

Incidentally, John also serves as a member of the American Library Association’s Committee on Accreditation as a Peer Review Panel Member who makes on-site visits to library schools which are going through the re-accreditation process.

—**Kee Malesky** of NPR taught Humanities Reference as an adjunct professor at Catholic University’s library school for about five years. She wrote, “I found that the students really appreciate the adjuncts because they know we’re real librarians and speak from practical experience. Any time you can say, ‘Today we had this question/challenge and here’s what we did,’ they’ll love it. One little ‘hidden agenda’ I’ve had is to get the shy ones to overcome their fear of speaking in public. I think most librarians need to be able to make a presentation to a manager, or train a group of users, or something like that which involves addressing a roomful of strangers. So I always encouraged oral presentations and tried hard to get good discussions going.”

—It’s no surprise that **Vicky McCargar** was recruited to teach Preservation Management by the San Jose State University School of Library and Information Science. In 2004 and 2005 she taught the same class for UCLA in the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies. “One of the things I’ve done at both places is rework the existing curriculum, which is mostly about books and libraries, to encompass a major segment (nearly 50% of the syllabus) on

digital preservation.”

—**Karen Van Rossem**, currently at Scholastic but formerly at Newsday, taught an online database-searching course for more than 10 years at Queens College’s Graduate School of Library and Information Studies in New York City. “I found the teaching very rewarding, and through my work with the college, Newsday had a great source for finding interns for our research library. It’s stimulating to work with students new to the profession and share your experience with them. It’s also great to have faculty access to a college library collection including the college databases. Timing can be tricky. It’s hard to leave for your class when a story is breaking and you’re close to deadline.”

—**Jim Hunter** of the *Columbus Dispatch* teaches the Special Libraries class at Kent State University School of Library and Information Science every other year, as a combination of guest speakers and visits to other libraries. He normally takes the students on six field trips, including to his own library, and gets guest speakers for the other meetings. Jim is an alumnus of Kent State; he started as a guest speaker for the previous instructor of the class, and got promoted. “I have made special library believers out of a number of students, and produced some conversions to special libraries along the way.” He has found he teaches management and leadership, because they are essential, and they aren’t taught in other courses.

So if you find yourself recruited - don’t resist. But expect some bumps along the way the first time you teach a course. Jim finally felt comfortable after the third time he taught the course. The payoff is that he’s been forced to learn about his profession “in a way you don’t when you are just working in it.”

A LONGTIME LIBRARIAN: KATHY WAXLER

The Columbus Dispatch's longest serving editorial employee reflects on a career in its library



By AMY DISCH

You may notice something a bit different about this issue's profile, namely that it concerns an individual rather than a library. I have thoroughly enjoyed writing and learning more about other news libraries and I plan to continue doing so. However, I also think it will be interesting to meet some of our colleagues who have worked in news libraries for a significant amount of time who can speak to the changes they have experienced and the joys and frustrations the job has brought them.

I have to give credit for this idea to my colleague **Linda Deitch**, who was remarking about the upcoming anniversary of another of our colleagues, **Kathy Waxler**, and mentioned that it might be interesting to write about people who have been working in news libraries for most, if not all, of their careers. I thought it was a great idea and asked Kathy if I could interview her for the inaugural librarian profile. She agreed, and I thank her for being generous with her time and her willingness to answer my questions.

Kathy Waxler has been with *The Columbus Dispatch* in Columbus, Ohio for 39 years and is the longest serving employee in its Editorial Department. Most of those years have been spent in the library, except for a couple of years when she worked as a paginator on the copy desk.



Kathy Waxler at the library

After graduating from high school in 1966, Kathy moved to Columbus to attend Bliss College, a business school that offered secretarial courses and helped students find employment after graduation. She graduated in May 1967 and after being out of work for the summer, admits she was desperate for a job. "My mom had told me I would have to move back home if I didn't find something." Then Kathy heard about an opening for a library assistant at *The Columbus Dispatch*, one of the city's two daily newspapers at that time, and the college sent Kathy for an interview. She wasn't really interested, but her thought was to "work there for a little while until a secretarial job opened up

somewhere." Kathy arrived for the interview and spoke with the paper's assistant managing editor (as there was no Human Resources department then) and was offered the job on the spot. Her salary: \$60 a week. "Big bucks," Kathy jokes now. Her first day at the *Dispatch* was September 5, 1967.

The Dispatch occupies a six floor building in downtown Columbus and when Kathy started there, the library was located on the top floor. A second building, housing the presses, was located immediately behind the first and the two were adjoined by a walkway.

A joint operating agreement existed between the *Dispatch*, which

Continued on next page

A LONGTIME LIBRARIAN: KATHY WAXLER

Continued from previous page

was the city's afternoon newspaper, and its morning counterpart, *The Columbus Citizen-Journal*, and the staffs of both papers worked in the same building, but on different floors. Kathy says she and her two co-workers only did work for the *Dispatch* newsroom employees, which at that time numbered around 100 people.

The library's main responsibility was to go through the daily paper, mark items of interest, clip the articles and file them. Kathy says they would receive only one copy of the paper to work with, so if a story had five items that needed to be indexed, the first item would be noted on the paper and then four copies of the article would have to be made for the remainder of the files. After the relevant terms were highlighted and each story was appended to its jump, Kathy and her colleagues would file them. When someone in the newsroom needed a clip file, they would call the library and Kathy or one of her co-workers would pull the file and take it to them. "Sometimes we joked that we needed roller skates to do our jobs," she says.

A similar process existed with photos. Kathy says that each day the library would receive a stack of original photos, which she and her colleagues would "match to what was in the paper. We would ID them and note on the back the date they ran and assign subject terms to them."

A few months after Kathy started, on December 15, 1967, the Silver Bridge, which spanned the Ohio River between Gallipolis, Ohio and Point Pleasant, West Virginia, collapsed, taking 37 cars and trucks into the river and killing 46 people. Kathy remembers how hectic it was in the library immediately following the tragedy. "We were asked to pull lots of clips and photos and I remember thinking this is an exciting job."



In 1976 Jimmy Carter campaigns for U.S. President in front of the newsroom doors of *The Columbus Dispatch*. Pictured with him are *Dispatch* staffers l-r: Kathy Waxler, Terri Varney, and Shari Doolin.

Kathy was a solo librarian for a time after her two co-workers left and remembers many nights being "forced to bring the paper home and having my roommate help me clip it." This led to a significant filing backlog, which "seemed to last a while," she says. Eventually, Kathy helped another of her friends get hired in the library, which alleviated some of that pile-up.

In 1974, **Jim Hunter** was hired as the *Dispatch's* first professional librarian. "Even with Jim on board, I still felt like the library's go-to person. For the first several months after Jim was hired, people would call the library, which was Jim's phone number, and ask for me."

Kathy believes the most significant change the library experienced is the introduction in 1985 of an electronic text archive. It was "much faster and I thought it was really cool." She adds that it meant "less chance of error. When filing by hand, even if you were doing a good job, mistakes get made, like clips getting put in the wrong file and entire files being lost." Kathy says

the move was generally well-received in the newsroom, although "some old timers still preferred holding the clips in their hands."

Even though the text archive was now electronic, the library continued to file print photos. Kathy particularly remembers working with the ACME photo collection, which had been purchased by Jim Hunter and delivered by semi from Cleveland. "An axle on the truck broke on the drive down," and when the collection arrived, Kathy remembers it being "very disorganized. The photos were in boxes and extremely old file cabinets, many of which couldn't be opened." They were placed in the basement of the paper's adjoining building and when she had time, Kathy would go over and review the photos, "trying to see what was good and looking for anything to add to the library's collection. It was musty and dusty," Kathy says, "but it was also fun looking through the different kinds of photos." The photos that were pulled were merged into the library's existing collection

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News Researchers Gather for Academy at Poynter

BY MATTHEW FERNANDES,
ST. LOUIS POST-DISPATCH
 AND ANGIE DROBNIC HOLAN,
ST. PETERSBURG TIMES

On a warm (sweltering to some of us) September evening in St. Petersburg, Florida, 14 news librarians from around the country gathered in the great hall at the Poynter Institute for Media Studies.

The meet-and-greet session within the impressive wood-beamed hall opened the 2006 News Research Academy. It would be the first Poynter academy specifically for non-management level researchers.

After a nice dinner, the group was led through our conference room and computer lab; an area that we would largely call home for the following three days.

Our worthy and benevolent guide throughout the academy was **Paul Pohlman**, Associate Dean at Poynter who teaches in the area of leadership. Paul was present at all of the sessions and used his great conversational skills to provoke lively discussions on the many issues that affect news librarians.

The next morning after breakfast at 7:30 a.m. (ouch), library director **Dave Shedden** led us on a tour of the institute and library. The library boasts an impressive collection devoted to journalism history, including books, art and artifacts from the *St. Petersburg Times*, which Poynter owns. Dave's historical displays and stories about former *St. Petersburg Times* Chairman Nelson Poynter were fascinating and enlightening.

After the tour came the opening session, titled 21st Century News Research, conducted by **Jody Habayeb**. Jody, presently a senior product manager at NewsBank, first gave a whirlwind history of news libraries taking us from clip files to telnet to the automated PDF technology that the future holds. In the discussion, Jody continually urged us to keep our tech skills sharp and to

volunteer to serve as middlemen and women between the IT department and the vendors. Another goal that came out of this session was figure out ways to provide more content for the online area of the newspaper.

Jody, who previously served as Archive and Research Manager at *Tampa Tribune's* News Center, also shared her knowledge and advice in the area of boosting the research department's image and importance in the newsroom. Her keys for building newsroom relationships were professionalism, trust, accuracy, timeliness, can-do attitude, story champion, good communication and providing value-added details in request responses.

The next session, Public Records, was presented by **John Martin**, news researcher at the *St. Petersburg Times*. John led a lively discussion of privacy issues and the changing landscape of public records accessibility. He stressed that databases like Accurint are NOT reliable when it comes to court and criminal records. A few examples he gave of journalists failing to perform basic criminal checks on subjects (and the resulting corrections) were enough to scare the bejeezus out of us all!

John stressed the importance of doing mandatory checks on all political candidates, hiring record retrievers, checking county records, and using BRB publications to learn how to obtain out-of-town records.

A demonstration of the new Nexis interface concluded the first day of the academy. In it, presenter Robyn Tolle noted that Accurint's database will migrate into a single Nexis platform called SmartLinux next year.

The new interface was dazzling and looks like it will make our jobs much easier in the future. The streamlined interface is much more logical for the end-user. Additionally, several powerful new features will open up new avenues of search technique, such as the freedom to group results

by category, publication name, subject, industry, company, geography or language.

Our second day started with **Derek Willis** of the *Washington Post* giving his presentation, "Wiki Wacky Woo: Collaborative tools that can make your newsroom better." Most of us news librarians had heard of wikis, if only to discourage our newsroom from publishing information straight from Wikipedia, a wiki anyone on the Internet can edit. On the other hand, the wikis we would create would reside safely inside our newsroom firewalls, where only our colleagues could access it, Derek said. If the wiki was vandalized or parts were accidentally deleted, we news librarians would be able to identify the culprit and quickly restore it. Derek briefly showed how reporters at the *Washington Post* used the wiki - for instance, to share notes for their groundbreaking investigation of lobbyist Jack Abramoff.

We quickly delved into the nuts and bolts of how to set up a wiki. "Must have admin privileges! Must have admin privileges!" he chanted. Then he gave a hands-on demonstration in the Poynter computer lab of how to install the scripting language Ruby on a server, and then his favorite wiki software, Instiki.

We also reviewed of the ins and outs of keeping the server up and running. In non-geek language, the server is simply the computer (a.k.a. "the box") you've commandeered to hold the wiki. It can be a regular PC, it just shouldn't be your own workstation, because it works best if it's devoted to the wiki. From time to time, the box will have to be re-started, and daily diagnostics are a good idea as well. When something goes wrong, frequently all that is needed is a restart, Derek said.

A lively question and answer period followed. Because wikis are geared to storing and editing text, we had a discussion on PDFs and the best way to get data out of

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Front row: Angelica Cortez, *Palm Beach Post*; Jody Habayeb, NewsBank; Angie Drobnic Holan, *St. Petersburg Times*; Leslie A. Norman, *The Wall Street Journal*; Ana Rodriguez, *El Nuevo Herald* Back row: Matt Fernandes, *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*; John Maines, *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*; Erin Pfeiffer, *St. Paul Pioneer Press*; Mark Hannan, *USA Today*; Carolyn Edds, *St. Petersburg Times* (behind Hannan); Maria Wygand, *Charlotte Observer*; James S. Kim, *Los Angeles Times*; Julie Domel, *San Antonio Express News*; Amy Disch, *Columbus Dispatch*; Amy DeCicco, National Public Radio; Lamara Williams-Hackett, *Raleigh News & Observer*; Paul Pohlman, Poynter Institute.

News Researchers Gather for Academy at Poynter

Continued from previous page

them. Derek recommended xPDF and showed everyone how to get it onto his or her own computer and run it.

Following Derek's wiki session was the estimable **John Maines** of the *South Florida Sun-Sentinel*. Maines took us on an extensive tour of the finer points of Excel databases, including tricks and tips for column adjustment, filters, selecting and correct sorting. Using an example of a school district database, John showed us how to load the database onto a network. He agreed with Derek's mantra of the need for administrative privileges for your newsroom network.

In the second half of John's presentation, he showed us how to create an easy-to-use search interface for the newsroom. In this scenario, we built our own web pages, with a search box and a "go" button, that we would load onto our newsroom Intranet. The web page allows reporters direct access to information that gets a lot of use, and saves us news librarians time and energy in

the long run.

John also discussed the ins and outs of acquiring data, and how to handle the PDF problem. Some public officials are wise to the difficulties PDFs present for database work. "We get whole databases in PDF, because they know it's going to be hard for us to get it out of there," John said.

Another session offered was a Train-the-Trainer style workshop from **Debbie Wolfe** of the *St. Petersburg Times*, who gave a brief history of the role of news researchers as trainers. Organization is the key to success, Debbie said. That means being on the same page with your supervisor, identifying your own strengths, and enlisting help from others as needed.

Tipsheets and skills checklists are also vital tools for training efforts. These can help researchers teach and allow reporters to see where they stand in their learning. Debbie also talked about the importance of recognizing and catering to different learning styles - some people learn best visually, some verbally, some via hands-on demonstration.

Debbie also emphasized being an example and a cheerleader for training in your

own newsroom. Create your presentation, then get people in the door by making it enticing to them. If you want to train them on using the archive, for instance, use real-world examples they might find useful. (Byline counts were a suggestion from some of the researchers.)

On the final day, the group held a wrap-up session where we shared the goals we all hoped to bring back to our departments for implementation.

Before this closing lunch, though, the group piled into a bus and traveled over the waters of Tampa Bay to visit the *Tribune* in downtown Tampa. **Diane Grey**, the *Tribune's* head archivist, led us on a tour of the newsroom, recently-relocated news library and NBC News Channel 8.

One highlight (or lowlight for some) was sitting in on "Daytime," the weekday 'news-lite' shown mornings on Channel 8. To our surprise, jokester and co-host Dave Nemeth referred to us as "nude librarians" on air—while opening the show. Moments earlier we had told him we were "news librarians." We're sure he just misheard us...

Nominations for Division Board Announced

The following candidates are asking for your vote for News Division officer positions. You should have received a ballot in the mail. Please remember that ballots are due by December 1, 2006.

CHAIR-ELECT

RON LARSON

The Wisconsin State Journal / The Capital Times



Larson

I have been a news librarian since June 1978. During that time, our profession has grown and changed as we reacted and responded to new technologies and challenges.

I began my career as librarian for the *Wisconsin State Journal*. It was a small library consisting of many cabinets full of clippings and photographs. My assistants and I diligently marked, clipped and filed thousands of newspaper articles over the course of my first 11 years in the library.

You would have thought that 11 years of the tedious work of clipping and filing would have driven most clear-minded people to other professions, or at least, to other library work. But the exciting future of what lay ahead for news libraries was too intriguing to abandon.

I remember in 1981 the promise of text databases as I attended my first News Division seminars at the Atlanta SLA conference. How exciting was that future? I had to stick around for that. Little did I know it would take eight more years before that future device was installed in my library.

I remember in 1985 when the Lexis/Nexis sales rep stopped by my library to demonstrate the magic of searching the many newspapers online. How fantastic was that? I wasn't going to miss that opportunity. Our editor at that time was antiquated and stubborn and refused to invest in such things. I waited him out as he retired in 1986. The online era arrived in my library in 1987.

I remember in 1991 when the Internet was creating a buzz among librarians. I had to get involved with that. I set up e-mail accounts through the University of Wisconsin for interested reporters and editors. First, however, I had to answer their questions, "What's the Internet? What's e-mail?"

I remember in 1993 when NewsLib arrived, allowing our profession to communicate simultaneously to hundreds of fellow colleagues around the world. What a great listserv! I couldn't leave such a valuable group of professionals.

I remember also in 1993 when digital photography was forcing us to figure out how to archive such material. The challenge was too intriguing and the technology was too amazing to leave for some other line of work.

I remember in 1995 hearing about html and creating Web pages. What great potential did that offer news libraries? It was like magic! I had to stick around to incorporate that into my library.

I remember in 2000 hearing about digitizing the clip files or microfilm. The entire microfilm collection searchable?! How futuristic is that? I want to be around when it happens. It is extremely costly but I'm still exploring.

I remember just yesterday learning about RSS, wikis, blogs and mashups. I'm still trying to figure out those technologies, so I can't leave now.

Helping me through these many years of adventures and discovery has been the News Division, its members, conferences, NewsLib and *News Library News*. It's this group and its dedication to teaching, to sharing and to our profession that has been my primary motivation to continue on as a news librarian.

It is my goal, as I start out as chair-elect, then to chair-elect and finally chair, to continue the strong impact and legacy of the News Division for all of our members as we continue to react and respond to new technologies and challenges.

SECRETARY

AMY DISCH

The Columbus Dispatch

I am a news researcher at *The Columbus Dispatch* in Columbus, Ohio, a position I have held since September 2005.

Prior to that, I spent five and a half years working as a library assistant for the *Wisconsin State Journal* and *The Capital Times*, the two daily newspapers



Disch

in Madison, Wisconsin. There I had the good fortune to work for Ron Larson, who I credit with my decision to go to library school and to become a news librarian.

I have a Bachelor's degree in Communication Arts, with an emphasis on film history and a Master of Arts degree in Library and Information Studies, both from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. I am very active in the News Division, where I currently serve as Webmaster and am a contributing writer for *News Library News*. In 2004, I was the recipient of the Division's Vormelker-Thomas Student Award.

I served terms as secretary, President-Elect and President of the Wisconsin SLA chapter and will become President-Elect of the Central Ohio SLA chapter in January 2007. This summer, I co-taught an online course, "Specialized Information Agencies and Services," based at the School of Information Sciences at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville, with the school's director and my former professor, Dr. Ed Cortez. I am also a member of the school's Advisory Board.

The Division has been very good to me and I look forward to giving back in any way I can.

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Nominations for Division Board Announced

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MIKE KNOOP

San Antonio Express-News



Knoop

Michael Knoop has been the News Research Editor at the *San Antonio Express-News* since November 2000. Under the guidance of Kathy Foley, he leads a small but dynamic team of two researchers and two archivists in a professional but fun newsroom where job candidates have found themselves dancing with mariachis. He is most proud of his team's ability to hustle and communicate with almost telepathic ease. Mike enjoys working on the intranet, training, evangelizing about news librarianship and finding what cannot be found. His team hopes to launch the newsroom's first wiki this fall.

He completed his Masters of Libraries and Information Science at the University of Texas at Austin in 1999 and has also worked as a news researcher at the Dallas Morning News. Prior to his career change to librarianship Mike spent a decade in retail selling books, managing playgrounds, and remodeling K-Marts across the country. Although relatively new to the news business, he is no stranger to news. As a youth, Mike and family witness the Iranian Revolution firsthand until fleeing to the relative safety of Fort Worth, Texas.

In his spare time, Mike enjoys the city of San Antonio with his wife, two kids and dog. He also occasionally reviews music and books for the *Express-News*. He is obsessed with cover tunes.

PUBLICATIONS CHAIR

GAIL HULDEN

The Oregonian



Hulden

I am the News Research Director for *The Oregonian*, a major regional newspaper located in Portland, Oregon. I joined our library staff in 1987, became assistant librarian in 1988, and was promoted to News Research Director in 2000. I currently oversee a staff of four news researchers, write our in-house research blog ORB, and contribute expertise and content to our newsroom intranet. I also serve on several newsroom committees including the training steering committee and the readership interactivity committee.

I was one of three researchers who worked with *The Oregonian's* investigative team on a year-long investigation into the U. S. Immigration and Naturalization Service. The resulting series of stories, "Liberty's Heavy Hand," won the 2001 Pulitzer Prize for Public Service.

In recent past years, I worked with the Oregon Newspaper Publishers Association lobbyist and with Commercial Information Systems to maintain a news media exemption to Oregon Driver and Motor Vehicle Services records. Through this effort Oregon was one of very few states where the news media did retain access to both driver's licenses and vehicle plates.

I also served on the Oregon Secretary of State's Oregon Centralized Voter Registration Advisory Board. The board was responsible for providing the needs and requirements analysis for the proposed system for the state of Oregon. The centralized Oregon voter database came to fruition this summer.

I have been a featured speaker and panelist at IRE, Oregon-Online, and local library association conferences. Our news research team was featured in the January/February 2002 issue of the *IRE Journal* for their role in 9/11 terrorism coverage.

Besides my membership in SLA, I also hold professional memberships in Investigative Reporters and Editors and Society of Professional Journalists.

As Publications Director, my interest and expertise in web creation, blogging, and multiple communications systems would afford me the opportunity to give back to an organization from whose many resources I have long benefited. I'd be honored to provide assistance in any way.

MARION PAYNTER

The Charlotte Observer



Paynter

I received my MLS from Rutgers University in 1984. Most of my professional life has been spent in special libraries, including two years as the Information Director for PA Consultants, a British Information Technology consulting firm, based in Princeton, NJ. I also worked for several years at Educational Testing Service as an Information Analyst, providing reference service to staff and indexing new tests for inclusion into the 25,000-item ETS Test Collection database in ERIC.

In 1989 my family and I moved to Singapore for a three-year assignment for my husband's employer. Because of immigration restrictions I could not work (for money, anyway), so I became a professional volunteer instead. My biggest project involved helping with the installation of a

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Yowza! Two Transformative Years in the Energetic Life of The Associated Press News Research Center

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Beginning in 2001, NRC's director at the time, Mike Bass, began upgrading the department by hiring several other staffers with solid news research skills:

Monika Mathur, from the Bergen Record, where she had worked her way up from intern to Assistant Specialist in their Computer Assisted Reporting department during four years there; Rhonda Shafner, a veteran researcher with two decades of news-related experience at NBC and ABC; Julie Reed, with ten years of research experience in several university libraries, the Brooklyn Public Library system and the Mitchell Madison Group, a management consulting firm; Barbara Sambriksi, with ten years of research/investigative experience at global private intelligence firms Bishops Services and Sutton Associates; Jennifer Farrar, with 20-plus years of research and management experience in information centers at Ogilvy Public Relations and ad agency Ogilvy & Mather; and Judy Ausubel, who had five years in news research with Fox News and the *New York Post*.

In June 2003, the AP got a new president and chief executive officer, Tom Curley, who quickly called for the transformation of the news cooperative whose roots trace back to 1846. CEO Curley told industry executives that "we are transforming the AP from a wire service ... to an interactive database and news network". Exciting words for those of us in research. Meanwhile, Bass left NRC for a news manager assignment and Susan James took over as acting director, preparing the department for a massive move across town.

In July 2004, the AP moved our New York headquarters to the Hudson Yards

area, at 450 West 33rd St., after more than six decades in Rockefeller Center. Our new director, Lynn Dombek, came on board at the same time, and AP's news research department accelerated into high gear.

Dombek had more than 20 years' experience at major news organizations including the News Research Centers of NBC Nightly News and ABC News. She also worked at Time Inc., where she held a number of positions over the years, including the Assistant Director of the main Research Center.

NEW PROCESSES

When Dombek arrived at the AP, the NRC team was basically reactive and as such, significantly underutilized, except for Herschaft. We weren't doing any outreach or proactively suggesting projects, and our days were filled with handling research requests from AP bureaus. The team was sequestered in a small, crowded, dusty room at 50 Rockefeller Center, and although we maintained a newsroom workstation and attended the daily morning budget meetings, we were otherwise mostly invisible to AP editorial staff.

The new AP headquarters has an open-newsroom floor plan, and for the first time in decades, all editorial units are located on the same floor. As a result, NRC became visibly part of the news staff. Dombek immediately took advantage of that proximity as well as the team's experience and capabilities, soliciting our ideas, and suggesting research projects and technology-driven research solutions to news editors. She put her staff's knowledge to work creating much-needed marketing documentation and letting NRC researchers operate as trainers for the editorial staff.

Dombek set out to align her goals for NRC with the larger strategic agenda of the AP. The AP's challenge was to work effectively across its media platforms - text, photos, online, television - and use the most dynamic combination thereof to tell the

story. As news researchers, Dombek knew her staff would be fearless in their embrace of the different technologies, and she set about making sure we all became expert in the new tools needed to do our jobs well: spreadsheets, databases, RSS feeds, wikis, primary resource materials, an ability to synthesize and analyze information, and collaborating with reporters and editors, handing them wire-ready text or data.

Dombek also began encouraging researchers and the AP editorial staff to think differently about data and how to use it to provide context in reporting both breaking news and enterprise stories. NRC staff started to provide more wire-ready copy, receive taglines, and become effective research partners with AP reporters and editors. Dombek assigned researchers as 'leads' to important projects, which engendered new levels of professional responsibilities. We created innovative news and data products which informed our stories at nearly every phase of reporting, such as a database tallying reported individual deaths of Iraqi civilians in Iraq, and several databases detailing demographic information of the detainees in Guantanamo Bay prison.

The NRC team began getting internal recognition from senior AP staff due to our outreach initiatives. And then came a big honor. We won our first "Beat of the Week" in March 2005. "BotW" is an editorial staff awards competition in which AP gives a cash prize to the person or team that gets the biggest breaking news story of the week. NRC won for a project with a reporter in Baghdad, in which we created a database that tracked casualties from car bombs over time in Iraq, and provided the AP journalist with a statistical analysis of the murderous trend.

Since then, we've been credited in several Beat of the Week wins and honorable mentions, in partnership with other desks, by mining public records, analyzing external and NRC-created databases, and investigative research by Herschaft. Article top-

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NEWS RESEARCH DATABASES: Developed by the AP / NRC

BY JOHN PARSONS
DATABASE DEVELOPER, THE ASSOCIATED
PRESS NEWS RESEARCH CENTER

We've found innovative ways to use technology to assist in the research and reporting processes of the AP. By creating web-based databases and making use of readily available tools such as wikis and blogs, NRC has created a multitude of ways to collect, share and analyze information; to help organize teams of reporters working on a common topic; and to present material in more useful ways.

Here are some examples of recent projects:

Guantanamo Documents

We used an open-source indexing tool called Sphider (<http://www.cs.ioc.ee/~ando/sphider/>) to create a full-text, searchable database from the 3,000-plus pages of Pentagon transcripts relating to Guantanamo detainees obtained via a FOIA request by AP reporters. This database allowed the reporters to research names and stories and to analyze the documents much more quickly than if they had been forced to go through them individually. This project also made use of a blog, built on the popular blogging software WordPress (<http://www.wordpress.org>), to help coordinate the analysis of these documents and to create a clearinghouse for related information. Additionally, we set up processes for reporters to help them

methodically comb the transcripts for relevant information, and structure it for further analysis. Before we intervened, the plan was to put the unsearchable documents on an FTP site.

Wiki Farm

We created a Wiki Farm using the open source wiki software PM Wiki (<http://www.pmwiki.org/wiki>). A wiki is a simple web publishing platform that makes it easy to put content online, and our wiki farm allows news departments throughout the AP to set up a wiki in minutes. The wikis are used to share information and documents, coordinate projects and to make strategic plans. Examples include hurricane preparedness; an ongoing organ and tissue donation investigative series; tracking trials for multiple cases involving U.S. military personnel accused in the deaths of Iraqi civilians; AP Planners throughout the world; and Product Development.

Iraq Civilian Casualties Database

We started tracking casualties caused by car bombs in Iraq beginning July 2004, and in the face of continuing casualties (and no official accounting of them) expanded the dataset in April 2005 to include all AP reported casualties in Iraq. We converted a spreadsheet of standardized data points (date, location, cause of death, type of Iraqi killed, notes) into a SQL database with web

administrative and user front ends. The user interface has links that will automatically query the database for daily, weekly, and monthly totals; and totals by location of incident and cause of incident. The initial data structure was flexible enough to allow analysis by region, type of incident, and civilian or security casualties - important tools to help the AP understand the changing nature of the conflict and to report on it intelligently.

We have a similar product that tracks military deaths in Iraq and is available to all AP members. Another database was used to collect information on all of the Cardinals under consideration as successor to Pope John Paul II in the days before his death.

We are always on the lookout for new ways in which technology can be used to help fulfill our mission. Future projects include the creation of rapid development tools using Ruby on Rails (<http://www.rubyonrails.org>) that will be used to speed up the creation of web-based databases; a new home page for the News Research Center that will give the researchers a place to share research tips, sources and other information; and an update of our online research request tools that will make it easier for reporters to find answers to questions which may have already been answered, and to ask for help to find answers to those that have not.

GOING GLOBAL: Librarians in two countries share knowledge about an archiving system in common

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Borsen also has 5 Thesauruses for the following areas:

1. Journalists
2. People
3. Businesses
4. Other Names
5. Subject Codes

Advertisements are not searchable. However, with important adverts they can attach a summary with the same fields as searchable text. The web-based system has the .pdf and jumps attached in one link. Error information is placed in red text in the text block not in the .pdf files. They have one Archive available both to the public and internally. They have been running BRS since 1995, it went online in 1996. In 2001 internal and external databases were combined. To date they have 234,000 text files and 135,000 photos or images.

One of the most unique qualities of the Borsen Library is that the desks are hydraulic and can be elevated or lowered with the touch of a button. This is to prevent backaches and injuries as health and safety of their staff is their first priority.

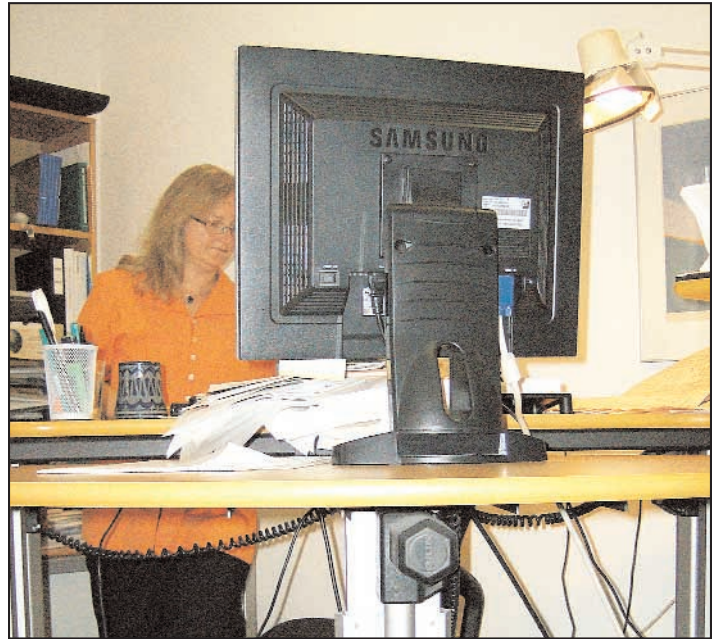
Borsen's content is also available on Factiva, Thomson, and Lexis/Nexis news databases world wide. Locally in Denmark it's available on the Danish news database Info Media. News in English is available there as well, with a clickable link.

THE TWO NEWSPAPERS / BRS Search users

The Royal Gazette/Mid-Ocean News vs Borsen

- ❖ *Royal Gazette/Mid-Ocean News*
 - Base platform - Windows Professional 2000
 - BRS Basis - Front End System
 - BRS Search 4.5 - Library Archives
 - QuarkXpress - Pagination Process
 - NetNews - Web based software package
 - Staff - 1
- ❖ *Borsen*
 - Windows XP
 - Home made software package - no name.
 - BRS Search 9.0 (= Livelink Discovery Server) by Borsen
 - QuarkXpress
 - XML-interface or / and - NetAnswer
 - Staff 6

While the software setup may vary, and no two newspapers



Pia Oltieng Hausen, Archive Assistant, working with the hydraulic desk elevated.



Pia Oltieng Hausen, Archive Assistant, working with the archive system.

companies operate exactly alike, the end goal is still the same. We both need to publish a newspaper daily and archive our content.

Deborah' Story

The Royal Gazette is a broadsheet newspaper. We have a circulation of approximately 16,000 newspapers per day. We have 4 Photographers, 6 Sub- Editors, 1 Editor and about 25 reporters including those that contribute columns, articles and information on a week-to-week basis. We are presently using Windows

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GOING GLOBAL: Librarians in two countries share knowledge about an archiving system in common

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Professional 2000 and some staff members have upgraded to Windows XP. The Library has not upgraded yet, however it will soon. We started using BRS Search on May 31st 2001.

We have no typesetters or enhancers for the Library. If something is missing I will have to locate it and attach it to the designated area of the Archives. The Photography Department is responsible for all photos entered into the system. However, from time to time we have bits and pieces of information missing or credits written in the text of the story, which I will type in.

Advertisements are not searchable, and we cannot attach searchable text at this time. We have two separate Archives: one available internally and the second one on our web site. We have merged our old Archives with the new; the grand total of objects includes a text archive of 300,000 stories, 75,000 pages and 156,000 photos, graphs, charts, illustrations and graphic images. Errors have a separate searchable field and are archived just like stories in our system, then attached to the particular story concerned, but not the .pdf files. We do not have any features that would change the colour of the ink for error messages at this time. We also do not have any Thesauruses at this time, although I would very much like to have at least one.

Regarding IT support, *The Royal Gazette* IT team are very timely, true lifesavers and address all my issues immediately. However, when I post something to Issue Trak, which was set up by SAXoTECH, the response is not as quick as I would like it to be. However, if you are able to identify a person with the system who knows and understands the software that you are using: hold on to that person: gather all their contact information as they will guide, help and assist you in ways you could only imagine. The only problem is, these people are few, far and in between and usually don't stay with the company very long.

Lastly, updates mean changes in the software and while I am still a one-person operation my biggest concern for the future is will upgrades result in software packages that I can maintain on my own. If not, we will definitely need to hire some additional assistance for me so that I can get through the day-to-day operation on a timely basis.

When I posted my message on Newslib six years ago, I basically requested that anyone in the world who was presently using SAXoTECH's BRS Search software to contact me about their Library Archiving software. Who would have thought a chance encounter would have resulted in a global connection half way around the world. Regarding R6, Margrethe agrees with our



Deborah Charles, News Librarian of *The Royal Gazette* and *Mid-Ocean News Library* working with the BRS Search Archives.

Editor; Mr. William Zuill Jr. It's still in the trial stages and SAXoTECH needs to sort out some of the technical difficulties first. While neither one of us have software that have all the bells and whistles we are both making the most what we have so that we can access our information in a timely and organized fashion whenever we need it.

Glossary of definitions

1. **BRS Basis** - This is the frontend system software or the introductory software that the reporters use when they enter their stories for the first time.
2. **BRS Search** - The Library Archiving software
3. **QuarkXpress** - Used for the Pagination Process or where the stories are placed on the Pages of the newspaper.
4. **NetNews** - The web-based software used to publish stories to our web site www.theroyalgazette.bm
5. **SAXoTECH** - The company who produces the SAXoPRESS softwares.
6. **SAXoPRESS Publishing System** - All the softwares that make the printing and documentation of the newspaper possible - BRS Basis, BRS Search, NetNews, QuarkXpress, Adobe Acrobat, MS Word are all used to get the information placed on the pages.
7. **Tabloid** - Newspaper that folds vertically e.g. *The Bermuda Sun*.
8. **Broad Sheet** - Newspaper that folds horizontally eg. *The Royal Gazette* and *The Mid-Ocean News*.
9. **Enhancer** - Person who preps the newspaper content in order for the information to properly archived.
10. **R6** - Most current SAXoTECH publishing software available.

Yowza! Two Transformative Years in the Energetic Life of The Associated Press News Research Center

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ics included Guantanamo Bay detainees, Costa Rican Elections, and NARA (U.S. National Archives and Records Administration) secretly sealing documents. The team has also collected more than 40 taglines so far during 2006.

Additionally, Julie Reed mined federal data sources to assist AP journalist Justin Pritchard with his series, "Dying to Work," an investigation of the high rate of job-related deaths for Mexican workers in the United States. Reed was credited on the series, which won the 2004 George Polk Award for Labor Reporting, and attended the winners' luncheon at Pritchard's invitation.

In addition to numerous newsroom projects, Dombek took a lead role in the AP's taxonomy initiative, creating the structure and staff positions for a new department, Information Management, and helping to hire its director and taxonomists.

EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

In late 2005, Dombek reallocated an open NRC staff position into a Database Development/Special Projects Manager role, signaling her clear commitment to sustainable development for research and news gathering over time. John Parsons joined the team in this capacity in December 2005. He had worked at Time Inc., Oven Digital, IBM, and the New York Public Library in a variety of roles, primarily as lead in Web development projects involving information-rich resources. He was instrumental in guiding us to model our processes on the concepts of Agile Programming.

Parsons hit the ground running at the AP, reconfiguring our technological infrastructure, and working closely with researchers and AP staff to create tools that enable reporting and communication on individual and cross-team projects. AP staff had been stymied by the lack of a common platform they could use interactively to share information. Together, Parsons and Dombek created a 'wikifarm' using open source software that is now in use throughout the organization. Wikis gained instant popularity for use as planners by news desks around the world, and AP editors in print, photos, television and broadcast are now able to keep track of staffers' movements and to share contacts, story ideas, background information and travel and credentialing advice.

With our carefully planned technical capabilities, we've been able to respond virtually on-demand to breaking news requests, as in the case of the Guantanamo documents site. The site was created in one day and enabled reporters to mine exclusive content and move it quickly on the Web and wire. We plan on continuing this approach by investing in hardware and software (mainly open-source) to support different environments, and a variety of data formats.

Our effectiveness comes from staff members' combination of journalistic research, technology and knowledge management skills, and our ability to leverage all three tracts simultaneously. The News Research Center is now uniquely qualified within the AP to offer a variety of knowledge-based technology solutions to support our journalism, because of our strong and varied skill sets, and our team-based approach to projects.

In addition to technological successes and creating original news content, NRC's behind-the-scenes work drew this comment from an AP bureau news editor: "It's hard for the casual reader to see the results of your effort ...your staff's research ensure

that the very theme of the story ... was correct and on target. To me, that kind of help in reporting is invaluable."

THE CROWNING ACHIEVEMENT

The crowning achievement came in September 2006, when, having been nominated by her team, Dombek won a much-coveted Gramling Achievement Award, which comes with a cash prize of \$10,000. This annual award, now in its 13th year, is given to individuals whose recent achievements have helped to advance the AP's mission as the world's premier provider of news and information.

The Gramling Award points to how far the NRC team has come in just the past two years.

Giving the award to a researcher was unprecedented, but written endorsements from supporters of the nominating entry called the idea "a no-brainer." The AP Recognition Awards Selection Committee wrote, "Lynn Dombek, Director of the News Research Center, was honored for transforming that department ... into an integral part of AP journalism across all platforms and departments. Dombek and her team of researchers take the lead in using research in everything from urgent breaking news to long-term investigative work, and often serve as a nexus for different departments covering the same event."

This recognition helps raise the visibility and perceived value of research as a news component, and underscores the commitment of the Associated Press to produce news products of the highest possible integrity. Dombek insists that her Gramling award honors all the hard work of the News Research Center team, saying she feels lucky to have been given the opportunity to work with such an outstanding group of researchers, and that she was able to accomplish what she did only with the cooperation and hard work of the entire department.

Continued on next page

Yowza! Two Transformative Years in the Energetic Life of The Associated Press News Research Center

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And so, we're proud to say in summary that the NRC team currently fields over 300 research requests monthly, many of our own derivation. Researchers participate in editorial meetings, produce datasets that inform reporting and create original content for the wire, Web and graphics. As Dombek often says when something good happens, "Yowza!"

A LONGTIME LIBRARIAN: KATHY WAXLER

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and those remaining were eventually sold.

Kathy typically worked a schedule of 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays, but remembers receiving occasional calls at home if someone was having trouble finding something. There were a few times as well when a question required her to go back into work.

The morning after an election also meant a different schedule. Kathy would go in as early as 4 a.m. "to pull the winners' photos and to assist with stories about the results. When I pulled photos, I would also organize them into categories, for example, judicial candidates," she says.

In 1990, Kathy left the library for several years to work as a paginator on the copy desk. She worked from 3 to 11 p.m., but eventually grew tired of working nights. In 1997, an assistant's position opened up in the library and Kathy decided to return there. "I missed the people and working in the library," she says.

Working at the *Dispatch* has had its share of perks; among them encounters with the famous, both human and non-human. Kathy remembers meeting the original Morris the Cat and his handler

when Morris was being photographed in the paper's studio and seeing Elsie the Cow in the lobby when she came to town.

Arnold Schwarzenegger also visited the *Dispatch* and waved as he walked past the library. "I thought he looked little," Kathy says now. She met presidential candidate Jimmy Carter one day on her way to lunch. "I shook his hand, he was very nice."

Kathy also remembers July 1, 1971, which marked the *Dispatch's* 100th anniversary. "There was a big cake and telegrams were read aloud in the newsroom."

Other moments have been more sobering, among them the January 1975 plane crash that killed the paper's publisher, Edgar T. Wolfe, Jr. and a 1970 strike by the paper's truck drivers that suspended publication for nearly two weeks. "We could only go in the building's front entrance," Kathy says, and because no paper was being published, "news bulletins and photos were posted in the front window." Kathy also recalls the time an electrical fire started in the paper's adjoining building and no one bothered to come tell the library staff what was happening. "Not one of the smoke alarms worked," she says. "There was smoke coming up outside the windows and we wondered what was going on. Finally a supervisor came in and told us to get the hell out."

Kathy currently works Sunday through Thursday and is responsible for text and photo archiving, as well as the maintenance of a homicide database that resides on the library's intranet. She has worked with Jim Hunter for nearly 33 years and says "Jim is not only my boss, I also consider him a friend."

As for the job itself, there is "something different every day and I feel like the library is my second home."

Author's Note: My hopes are that this will be the first of many such profiles to be periodically featured in *News Library News*; likewise that you enjoy reading this piece as much as I enjoyed conducting the interview and putting it to paper. Finally, if you or someone in your library is interested in being profiled, contact me at adisich@dispatch.com. I'd love to hear from you.

PEOPLE

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Barbara believes Carolyn has the technical talent, the energy, and the dedication to maintain NewsLib's best practices, its current subscriber access and protocols, as well as to help chart NewsLib's future.

Emily Glenn just started a position with the Association of College and University Housing Officers International (ACUHO-I) as their corporate librarian. She maintains their library and archive of materials, answers questions for the membership and assist with research and writing for the association's magazine, *Talking Stick*.

Paul McCardell who is the lone researcher at the *Baltimore Sun* was mentioned on Episode Six of *The Wire*. Someone is looking for a dummy photo. And a character named Norm Wilson (named after a long time night editor at *The Sun*) says, "call photo researcher Paul McCardell at the *Sun* papers."

Nominations for Division Board Announced

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new integrated library system at the American School.

I've been at the *Charlotte Observer* for 12 years; the last 10 of them as Library Manager.

Outside the newsroom, I am proud of two professional events during the recent past: my presentation at the 2004 continuing education conference session "Deadline Due-Dilligence: People-Finding", and my selection as a delegate to the "Libraries in the 21st Century" international seminar held in 2004 in Salzburg, Vienna.