

## NLN FEATURE

### What Makes an Extreme Researcher? An interview with *Washington Post's* Julie Tate

By SUSAN FIFER CANBY AND BARBARA SEMONCHE

#### How did you come to your position at the *Washington Post*?

"I was working as a fact-checker at the *New Yorker* for about five years—my husband and I decided to move back to the area, and I had heard from colleagues at the *New Yorker* about the news research department at the *Washington Post*, which seemed like it could be a potentially good fit. I started here in 2002 as a part-time researcher; (I started the same week that the DC Sniper story broke, I didn't move to full time until about two years later). The work is different than fact-checking in many ways, most markedly it is more front-end research here and back-end research as a fact-checker. Newspaper research helps shape the stories more than fact-checking does, though that being said, a fact-checker has a little more editorial involvement in the end process."



Julie Tate  
*Darrow Montgomery/  
Washington City Paper*

#### What in your college/university experiences prepared you for the research work you do now?

"I studied English Literature at Virginia Tech

with a concentration in Women's Studies and Recent America History. I never intended to be a journalist when I was in college. My publishing career began when I moved to New York City to be an intern for *Harper's Magazine*. I think what prepared me most was working in a lot of different environments and having to be really creative about getting information."

#### How did you make your job your own?

"My style as a researcher is to try to know as much as possible about what the reporters I work with closely are working on—that way, when I am scanning Nexis, the internet, or talking to people, I can recognize information that might be of interest to them or that fills in holes or illuminates issues of interest to the reporters. As the terrorism researcher, I do a clip search each day on terrorism events, keep up various databases of suspects and Guantanamo detainees, and also participate in ideas meetings, and finally, monitor court cases—all in the interest of keeping abreast of trends, etc."

#### Who were or are your role models?

"In the past, the people I have looked to are pretty diverse. As a student, my contemporary literature professor, Tom Gardner, taught me how to think outside of the box, and be more creative in my reading of texts which I think has helped me in trying glean more information out of general

news sources. Deborah Treisman, who I worked with at *Harper's Magazine*, Grand Street, and the *New Yorker* was a great influence—she pushed me harder, and helped me understand places to get information, and best ways to get it. Margot Williams was an incredible mentor and teacher at the *Washington Post*, and always took the time to show me different ways to search things and present information. Sarah Cohen, the *Washington Post* database editor, has also been really influential and a fabulous teacher. She can break down immediately what information you are going to need convey and what information is just not going to be helpful. Lucy Shackelford, Alice Crites, Richard Drezzen, Madonna Lebling, Robert Thomason and Meg Smith, in particular, always amaze me in the ways they research their different subject areas. I think it's important to know what you can't do, and how to recognize other people's expertise."

#### [Contributing to pieces that won journalism's highest honor, aside...] Are there any accomplishments you are particularly proud of, if you were to show an example of your best work?

"Several years ago I worked on a project with Dan Eggen charting terrorism prosecutions in the US, it involved interpreting court cases and data concerning those individuals charged with crimes

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**News Library News**  
Spring 2008  
Vol. 30, No. 3

**News Library News** (ISSN 1047-417X) is the bulletin of the News Division of the Special Libraries Association. SLA Headquarters address is: SLA, 331 South Patrick St., Alexandria, VA 22314. The phone number is: 703/647-4900. **News Library News** is published four times a year by the division. Reproduction in whole or part without permission is prohibited.

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BY LEIGH MONTGOMERY

Being an editor is, at various times, an exhilarating, frustrating, demanding and rewarding experience, and one which I hope everyone tries their hand at sometime (in fact, the News Division is looking for an editor for this very publication, but I digress...). One of the editor's main responsibilities is balancing the tension between what readers want versus what they need; or, in other words, what story should be told - and how to tell it?

It is my great honor to present the Spring 2008 and Conference Preview issue with documentation of how far this profession has advanced, with stories of and contributions by our news research colleagues, and a few suggestions from the very best in hopes you will find a tip or two as well as some inspiration.

Our cover story is dedicated to **Julie Tate**, a researcher at the *Washington Post*,

whose contributions were an integral part of four of the six Pulitzer award-winning entries in 2007. For her, we are paying tribute to not only a great talent but proof that researchers are behind journalism's highest honor. All credit due to Julie as well as to the fine efforts of some of the most accomplished librarians in our profession: **Susan Fifer Canby** and **Barbara Semonche** who have been dedicated to mentoring and documenting news librarianship and helped tell this story.

This story needed to be told as firm evidence for our readers and editors that research-based journalism is essential for telling the stories of our times; articles that explore an issue or problem thoroughly and hopefully inspire action for change. And it is also for our industry, which is facing challenging economic times - even though the demand for news and information has never been higher, nor the need for newspapers more important.

In this issue you will also find a profile of the *Wall Street Journal* librarian **Leslie Norman** and her library by our colleague **Amy Disch** and our most news-filled feature: **Jennifer O'Neill's** People column.

For those attending the Seattle conference, there is an item of high informational value - what to see and do in Seattle - by our *Seattle Times* colleague **Katherine Long**, and a profile of and the award-winning essay by **Heather Cottle**, this year's Vormelker-Thomas Student Award winner, on digital archiving.

And so I submit my final issue as your editor with great pride and not a small twinge of sadness that my term has come to an close. I have genuinely loved this responsibility and have learned so much from working with you. And between Julie Tate, our dedicated columnists, new developments in news technologies, and ways of telling stories, I can only look forward to what's next.

# EOS

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*"The EOS system as a whole has revolutionized work methods within the Library."*

- Sarminah Tamsir  
MediaCorp

EOS Record

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## NOTES FROM THE CHAIR



BY JUSTIN SCROGGS

It doesn't seem possible that eleven years have passed since we last met in Seattle. Looking through my conference files I see notes from that Seattle conference from sessions on *Computer-Assisted Reporting*, moderated by **Teresa Leonard**, and one on *Getting your Archives on the Web*, led by **Ginny Everett**. And does anyone else remember the panoramic view from the restroom (women's) at Columbia Tower Club? But I digress.

This year's conference promises to be just as memorable. **Ron Larson** has assembled a team of talented presenters and moderators. The fun will begin on Saturday with a reception and tour at the *Seattle Times*, and won't stop until the Future of News Libraries (Part II) session on Wednesday. I hope to see everyone in Seattle.

Thinking about the last Seattle conference and other past conferences took me back along Nostalgia Blvd to my first newspaper job — jack-of-all trades text enhancer, byline /clip file 'ripper', receptionist and fledgling researcher. I loved ripping papers for the clip files, especially news briefs. In honor of that training, and days spent wielding a razor-sharp pica pole, the remainder of this quarter's column will consist of news briefs.

### An hour to spare?

The division needs your help! Interested in working closely with our very own **Barbara Semonche** (Librarian Deluxe)? The division is in need of an archivist. Ever thought about learning newsletter production or web publishing? With this issue Leigh will hand off the green editor's visor and *News Library News*. And although it hardly seems possible, Amy's term as keeper of our website is winding down.

None of those opportunities quite a match? Take a look at the web-page adoption center or scroll down the current officers' page, past the photos (mine, masterfully retouched - thank you!). You'll see we

also need chairs for the Nominations, Government Relations and International Relations committees.

Please consider volunteering. And why not, just for fun, call a former Archivist or NLN editor or Web-ifier and says thanks? And while you're chatting, ask them about the job!

### Recycling

Is that a Montreal-era conference hand-out in the dust-covered stack of papers behind your monitor? Do you sometimes take a few minutes on a Friday afternoon to pull that down that battered Princeton file of back issues of NLN and re-read a few issues?

A few years ago I had the honor/pleasure of creating a booklet chronicling our division's first seventy-five years. That project was only possible because division members had taken time over the years to preserve the present by sending materials to the archives. So next time you just have to clean out that "SLA" folder or run across those incriminating photos from the Anaheim conference, do consider jotting down a note, or adding a caption and sending those items along to the archives.

### Click-University

When SLA announced the launch of Click U some years ago, I'll admit I was less than enthusiastic. And to be honest, I'd not given Click U much thought since. But a chance visit a couple of weeks ago to the Click U website - [www.clickuniversity.com](http://www.clickuniversity.com) - left me impressed, and I'll admit it, excited. Click U now offers a range of programs from free seminars to professional certification programs in Competitive Intelligence, Knowledge Management and Copyright Management. Since my business manager (and lovely wife) has reminded me it's her turn to go back to school, I won't be signing up for a certificate program, but I have signed up for the execuBooks service. Do check out the Click U site and the links to

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# The Ultimate Tour of Seattle

BY KATHERINE LONG

RESEARCH EDITOR, *SEATTLE TIMES*

You'll never run out of things to do in Seattle, but you may run out of time.

We know you won't be in town for long during the Special Libraries Association's annual convention, so the *Seattle Times* researchers have assembled a list of quick but interesting places to visit in between convention sessions. Most of these jaunts can be done on foot from the Washington State Convention Center, and can be done in a few hours or less. Any of the landmarks listed below will be prominently marked on any good tourist map.

For starters, you must take a pilgrimage to the new Seattle Public Library, a \$165.5 million steel-and-glass building designed by renowned Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas. The four-year-old building is a glass-and-architectural showpiece, with a spiral of books and edgy, interesting spaces. You may love it or hate it, but it's certainly not boring.

The century-old Pike Place Public Market is one of Seattle's most recognizable landmarks, and a good place for souvenirs. It's mostly a market for fish, produce and flowers. One of our favorite diners is the Athenian Inn - although the fare is pretty bland, the view from the balcony upstairs is fantastic, and the place has a lot of character.

The Seattle Art Museum has a terrific collection of Native American and Asian art, as well as a nice exhibit of modern paintings. The museum's little cafe is a very civilized place to pick up a bite to eat.

Seattle Art Museum's new outdoor sculpture park is a free public arts park with monumental sculptures and a glorious view of Puget Sound. Keep walking north to Myrtle Edwards Park, a pedestrian and bike trail that skirts the edge of Puget Sound and affords great views of the water, as well as



The Seattle skyline.

container and cruise ships heading in and out of port. If the weather is clear, the Olympic Mountains will sparkle to the west.

Pioneer Square is the oldest part of downtown Seattle, an eclectic mix of art galleries, coffee shops, clubs and book stores

(we recommend a stop at Elliott Bay Books in particular, where you can browse for hours or get a bite to eat below). A few blocks south at Safeco Field you can catch a Mariners game - the team has a home stand June 13-18.

For a good view of the city from above, we prefer the Smith Tower in Pioneer Square rather than the Space Needle. The Smith Tower was once the tallest building west of the Mississippi. The manually-operated brass-and-copper-caged elevators date from 1914.

Near Pioneer Square is the city's main ferry terminal, Coleman Dock, and if you have a few hours to spare you can board a ferry and take a half-hour trip across the water to Bainbridge Island. You'll get a great view of the city from the deck of the ferry, and you can grab a bite to eat at one of the little cafes on Winslow Way, near the waterfront.

*“...the Seattle Times researchers have assembled a list of quick but interesting places to visit in between convention sessions.”*

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## PEOPLE



BY JENNIFER O'NEILL

**Dave Larzelere** retired from *The Flint Journal* on March 31st. He was assistant librarian at *The Flint Journal* from 1975-1979 and chief librarian from 1979 to 3/31/2008. *The Flint Journal* offered him a buyout that he says he couldn't refuse.

Dave was a member of the SLA News Division from 1976 to 1997.

He plans to spend his future years being a "soccer dad" to his four year old daughter and possibly working part time at an occupation that requires no knowledge of computers, current events or the auto industry.

And in case there was any confusion Dave states that he was not an extra in the movie "Semi-Pro" that was partially filmed in downtown Flint. Although he has seen the alley where Will Ferrell, "Jackie Moon", spent an afternoon filming a scene in a dumpster. It is a block from *The Journal*. Ferrell was asked a question that day about what he thought of Flint and responded "It's nice. It's got a great back alley."

**Amy Disch** writes that **Jo Budler**, State Librarian of Ohio, recently visited *The Columbus Dispatch* library and wrote about it recently in her travel diary <http://winslo.state.oh.us/visitjournal/visitfeb08.html#dispatch>. They were very proud to have been the first special library Ms. Budler had visited.

**Linda Deitch** suggests that other news librarians consider inviting their state librarian for a visit. Linda is so right when she says "It's not something you might think of doing, but it's a great connection to make!"

*A Vancouver Sun* editorial feature has won an award from the Society of Graphic Designers of Canada.

The Graphex 2008 award of distinction recognizes the Big Graphic, a feature that appears monthly on the second page of Saturday's Weekend Review section. It was conceived in 2006 as a collaboration between the *Sun's* editorial team and Rethink Communications of Vancouver. The *Sun's* News/Graphics Research Librarian **Kate Bird** researches topics selected by the newspaper's editors, and a design is conceived and executed by Rethink's Nancy Wu, Kim Ridgewell, Jeff Harrison, and Lisa Nakamura.

This year's Graphex winners will be exhibited at the Roundhouse in Yaletown May 5 to 11.

**Shira Kavon**, News Librarian at the NY Bureau of CNN, has taken over leadership of the Broadcast News Librarians group within the News Division, ably led for several years by NPR's **Kee Malesky**. She would appreciate hearing from any Division members who are working in broadcast news with their ideas for programs on topics that are of special interest to them either through the Newslib listserv or at [shira.kavon@turner.com](mailto:shira.kavon@turner.com).

## Vormelker-Thomas Student Award Winner

By AMY DISCH, *THE COLUMBUS DISPATCH* CHAIR, 2008 VORMELKER-THOMAS STUDENT AWARD COMMITTEE

Heather Cottle is the 2008 recipient of the Vormelker-Thomas Student Award, an annual honor presented to a graduate student interested in pursuing a career in news librarianship. Heather holds a bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Missouri-Columbia and is currently pursuing a Masters in Library Science at the School of Information Science and Learning Technologies, also at the University of Missouri-Columbia. She holds a Graduate Research Assistantship at the University of Missouri Journalism Library.

In her statement of professional goals included as part of her application package, Heather states that she is interested in news librarianship because it gives her an opportunity to combine her background in journalism with her interest in research. She is looking forward to meeting other news librarians in Seattle, where she hopes to "begin establishing connections that I will use when I become a professional librarian."

The Vormelker-Thomas Student Award, named in honor of Rose Vormelker and Lou Thomas, was established by the News Division in 1977. It offers a \$1500 stipend, provided through the generosity of ProQuest and the News Division, which enables a graduate student to attend the SLA annual conference.

The 2008 Vormelker-Thomas Student Award committee members were **Jessica Baumgart**, Renesys; **Angelica Cortez**, Pomcor Inc; **Linda Deitch**, *The Columbus Dispatch*, **Amy Disch**, *The Columbus Dispatch* and last year's student stipend winner, **Sara Wedell**, Delta Township District Library.

*Heather's winning essay, which discusses the challenges of digital archiving, is featured here.*

## Digital Archiving is a Dynamic Issue

By HEATHER COTTLE

Digital archiving is a dynamic issue in today's news libraries. As the world becomes increasingly digitized, more citizens expect instant online access to news archives in a variety of formats. Furthermore, newspapers and magazines are publishing more and more articles online, which presents challenges for archivists that are not experienced with traditional formats. Digital information is more easily corrupted. Some multimedia are so closely connected to a particular type of software or hardware that they cannot be used outside of their specific environment. This makes the archiving process incredibly complicated, as librarians must employ a variety of methods and vendors to digitize different kinds of multimedia projects. Sometimes, when a library upgrades or changes its software programs, it finds that it can no longer archive certain materials using the new system. This becomes expensive as libraries must purchase and operate multiple systems or face gaps in the coverage of their archives.

On top of the complexity of digital archiving, librarians also have to justify the costs of doing it. Some administrators argue that it isn't worth creating archives because the text of news articles can be accessed through databases that the library subscribes to. However, many librarians agree that archives are useful for providing the news library ownership to news articles as opposed to access. When a library subscribes to a database, the agreement is similar to leasing a house—the institution can only access the information within the database as long as it is paying for it. If, for some reason, the agency discontinues the subscription, then all the material from the database is inaccessible to

that agency and its patrons. Creating its own digital archive ensures that a library will have indefinite access to its news articles no matter which databases it subscribes to.

Another decision to be made is whether or not to continue archiving news articles in other formats as well as digital. Microfilm is currently the primary method for archiving materials in a physical format. There has been much debate about whether or not it is worth the investment of time and money to continue the practice of producing microfilm. Some news agencies are now digitizing their microfilm resources because the traditional format is considered outdated. Some feel that it takes up too much space. However, burdensome as it is, microfilm is the most reliable form of archiving available. Unlike digital archives, microfilm is not susceptible to technological problems that can render archives temporarily inaccessible or even permanently destroyed. For this reason, many librarians argue that both microfilm and digital archives are necessary. Microfilm is a backup to be used during technical difficulty—or by researchers who prefer the traditional format—and provides a resource that will be available for years. Digital archives are more convenient, searchable (a big benefit!), and may be used by multiple users at once.

In conclusion, digital archiving is a complicated issue that presents several problems, for which there seem to be no clear-cut solutions. However, as we progress in the Digital Age, the issue will not go away. News librarians must stay tuned in to new developments in digital archiving in order to provide the best resources for reporters, editors, and other news practitioners.

## The *Wall Street Journal* Library



By AMY DISCH

The *Wall Street Journal* Library provides reference and research services to the employees of the *Wall Street Journal* and its online counterpart, WSJ.com. A staff of two, Assistant Librarian **Leslie Norman** and news assistant **Ed Ramos**, have very full days fulfilling research requests, giving presentations and offering training. The majority of these tasks are performed by Norman, but she also trains Ramos as time allows and frequently gives him “requests for phone numbers and court cases so he gets as much practice as possible.” Ramos’ additional responsibilities include managing bills, “preparing chargeback statements, keeping the newspapers filed and working with the microfilm machine.”

The library, which is currently located in Princeton, New Jersey, is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., but Norman admits she often stays late to complete work due to the library’s small staff. She and Ramos receive “requests via e-mail,” both from their individual accounts, as well as a general library account, “and phone from reporters looking for all kinds of information.” The majority of questions come from *Wall Street Journal* employees based in New York City, but Norman says “requests come from all over the country and occasionally from overseas” as well.

The “library has a very small collection of printed materials,” largely a result of more resources becoming available online. Norman states that as “the collection grew smaller,” so did “the physical space of the library.” Many parts of the collection were also lost after the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. The library, which was located in a building directly across from the World Trade Center, was so affected by dust that ultimately many items could not be saved.

Norman says that she and Ramos “rely heavily on online material” and that what they are unable to “get online,” they “order from document retrieval services, such as the New York Public Library Express, CourtExpress and CourtLink.”

Norman typically welcomes new employees in the *Wall Street Journal*’s News Division by letter, but says the library’s marketing efforts are challenging “because we are short-staffed.”

Norman’s path to her current position began with four years spent “as a research assistant at Bloomberg LP.” She then began the Master of Library and Information Science program at Rutgers University, eventually leaving her job to pursue her degree full-time. After graduation, Norman found a part-time position working in Rutgers Labor and Management Relations Library and then “the position at the *Wall Street Journal* was posted through different e-mail newsletters.” Norman applied, was granted an immediate interview and began her current position in April 2005. When asked what she learned in library school that has helped her in her current position, Norman states “Always ask ‘Who cares?’ as in ‘Who cares enough about a subject to collect and store information about it?’” Once you answer that question, seek out “those people and organizations.”

Since the October 2007 retirement of longtime Head Librarian Lottie Lindberg, Norman has assumed the duties of running the library, which entails “making decisions about division of labor” and being the main point-person for presentations, training and research.

Several changes are facing the library in the next year, namely “a move to the News Corporation Headquarters in New York

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## What Makes an Extreme Researcher? An interview with *Washington Post's* Julie Tate

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having to do with terrorism. It was a real accounting of the criminal prosecutions on the war on terror. I also am really proud of the original data I gathered and analyzed for Steve Fainaru's private security contracting pieces. But sometimes, it is just in the mundane that makes the difference, finding the vital piece of information for a lead, finding a perfect person who has been hiding, figuring out who the best prospect is to talk about a particular sensitive issue."

### What do you find most challenging and why?

"I think it's hard to make sense of huge amounts of data, and make calls on what is important, and hard to sell a data-driven project to reporters sometimes. It is challenging to get sources from certain agencies to give me information sometimes - but easier since I am calling from the *Post*."

### Do you work in teams? And how?

"I don't do a lot of working in teams, but when I do, what I like is being able to play off of other people's strengths, and discover how they do things differently. That's the kind of thing that sticks with me when I'm back working on my own, and struggling to find something. You think, "OH. I remember someone did this AMAZING thing, let me try that here."

### How is the news library organized and your particular focus?

"I am assigned to the national desk which covers political, national security and day-to-day news stories. Other library staff are assigned to international, metro and financial desks. We share information via our intranet, The Source, as well as in library news meetings."

### What next would you most like to learn?

"I'd really like to strengthen my CAR skills and be self-sufficient in that way. I'd like to be better at getting FOIAs back. Increasingly, we will probably be doing more training for journalists to use information tools and to share our strategies."

### If you were not a researcher, what job/profession would you like?

"I would have liked to have been an attorney, the legal research I do now still feeds that desire."

### Is your research work assigned to you? Do you suggest/propose ideas for research projects? Can you give examples?

"Work is assigned through a combination of reporters asking for help on stories, and also editors asking the news research center for research assistance on projects. Generally the projects that editors approach NRC on are assigned through Lucy Shackelford with an eye to who might have the most time or might have the most expertise for a project, etc."

### What are your most favored print and/or digital research resources? Any particular or unusual or little known favorites?

"I rely heavily on my phone skills to get information for stories, including different numbers from the Department of Defense or contracting numbers. I also spend a lot of time on Pacer, looking at developments in court cases we are following."

"I always check out Secrecy News by Steven Aftergood, ResourceShelf, and other research blogs."

### Are you a member of SLA?

"I have been and intend to join again - I know how valuable these collegial relationships are."

## Interviews on working with Julie Tate

BY BARBARA SEMONCHE

LUCY SHACKLEFORD ON JULIE TATE

*Lucy Shackelford thinks of herself more as a news researcher than a library manager, but the truth is that she is both and more. At the Washington Post, Lucy is the Director of Research and she is also Julie Tate's "boss." Prior to coming onboard at the Post, Lucy worked for Newsweek as a researcher and reporter.*

*Lucy wrote: "...researching in the Washington bureau at Newsweek is very similar to the Post position of desk researcher. In Newsweek's DC bureau, I worked with all the reporters and editors in the office — we'd discuss story ideas for that week's magazine, and I'd quickly get a sense of what stories were important and provide background clips, documents, reports, experts, and sources for the reporters and editors. If there was breaking news, reporters and editors would be re-tasked, and because I was in constant touch with all of them, I could jump into researching for their new assignments. So when I returned to the Post after 9/11, desk researching seemed a good fit. (In Newsweek's NY office, the research department doesn't sit among reporters and editors. They have their own separate research area instead of literally sharing space with Newsweek's various departments.)"*

Lucy considers Julie and the other *Washington Post* researchers as part of the *Post's* present and future. They are a valuable resource worthy of continued investment. But, Lucy notes, "Our resource budget is shrinking, as is the budget throughout the newsroom. However, the *Post* has always been very generous and has made sure we have the most current and updated resources and databases available. Regarding training, we're trying to think beyond what has typically been considered conferences suitable for researchers. DC is the perfect location for this — with so much available at local universities, through government agencies and [other] resources... the Library of Congress alone is one of the best resources available to us."

Continued on page 10

## Interviews on working with Julie Tate

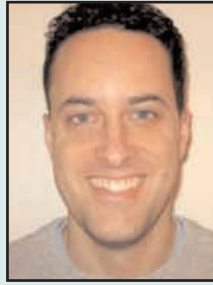
*Continued from page 9*

Describing some of the special qualities highly valued in *Washington Post* researchers, Lucy stated that in hiring, education is important and having a MLS degree is valued although everyone on the research staff does not have one. Certain other qualities such as curiosity and the ability to think ahead, being respectful of different viewpoints, having interesting opinions, demonstrating adaptability, as well as assertiveness, are keys to a successful career as a researcher. A mind set of "I can do this!" seems to help.

Lucy offered an example of this "can do attitude" shared between the research departments and the web content developers. It became obvious that some of the information research staffers produced for the paper could have an interesting place on the website.

"Case in point is Faces of the Fallen. <http://projects.washingtonpost.com/fallen/> Researchers populated a database of those killed in the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. The website recognized the viewer value to running the same information on the site." In addition, Lucy reported, "brainstorming" sessions took place between the two groups in the early stages of the war and still takes place in order to discuss new information that can be added and displayed."

In summary, Lucy recognizes Julie Tate and all the *Washington Post* researchers' data collection and analysis efforts as well as their collaboration within the news organization are essential to high quality news coverage and delivery now and in the future.



Derek Willis

*DEREK WILLIS  
ON JULIE TATE*

Derek Willis, has some high praise for his former colleague, Julie Tate. In early 2006 they worked together with *Washington Post* reporter, Dan Eggen on researching the U.S. Department of Justice's prosecution of people charged with terrorism.

Since the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001, federal agencies involved with protecting U.S. citizens have worked to make America safer. Some success was achieved in the Department of Justice's prosecutions, but there were problems. A sizeable number of innocent people were implicated as being associated with the Islamic extremist groups that threaten the safety of the United States. Some have been held while being investigated for terror-related crimes, then convicted and sentenced for lesser offenses. Some were never charged at all. Others - some of whom are naturalized citizens - have been threatened with deportation for inconsistencies on immigration paperwork.

Derek recalled that Julie spent long hours tracking over 300 individuals who were prosecuted and convicted by the Justice Department for terrorism, distilling specific charges from the cases and tracking the legal outcomes. To do this, Derek reported, Julie examined and analyzed these cases in the Federal Courts by searching such databases as PACER and Westlaw, telephoning attorneys involved with the cases, and emailing her many contacts in legal circles.

Derek, now with *The New York Times*,

said that his major contribution was his technical expertise in building a database of Julie's results and then running database queries for the news story. Julie earned a shared byline with Dan Eggen for the page 1 story; Derek earned a credit line. The *Washington Post* published a two-part series in its June 12, 2006 issue, "U.S. Campaign Produces Few Convictions on Terrorism Charges - Statistics Often Count Lesser Crimes" and "In Terror Cases, Few Convictions - U.S. Often Depends on Lesser Charges."

Summarizing Julie's exceptional research talents, Derek says, "Julie is not only smart, capable and ambitious, she has curiosity and drive in news gathering. Reporters think so well of her because she operates the way they do." Derek goes on to say that the *Washington Post* news staff is well aware of its news researchers' skills, perhaps because they are assigned to news beats along with reporters and editors and are well versed in the sources, issues, and trends associated with specific news coverage. But another factor might be that news researchers, like Julie, are becoming experts in building repertoires of valued contacts, developing a knowledge base that is utterly reliable, and then delivering the data in the best possible format on deadline. Either way, clearly Julie and her colleagues are the data miners who bring extra value to the competitive world of news.

*PULITZER PRIZE WASHINGTON POST  
REPORTER MARGOT WILLIAMS ON  
JULIE TATE*

Margot Williams knows how to connect the dots. She knows Julie Tate, her impressive research achievements with her amazing colleagues at the *Post*. Julie didn't begin her career as a librarian or

*Continued on next page*

## Interviews on working with Julie Tate

Continued from page 10



Margot Williams

news researcher; she joined for the *Post's* research department from her earlier position as a fact-checker for *The New Yorker* magazine. Julie took to the extensive database training experience Margot offered and later teamed up with Margot on several *Post* research projects. Margot, now Database Research Editor with *The New York Times* and a Pulitzer Award-winning researcher herself, offers high praise of Julie's recent research contributions which led to Pulitzer Prizes for the *Washington Post*.

Margot recalled Julie was part of

research and reporting teams for the *Post* on several high-profile projects including the scandals at Blackwater Security Company, neglect at Walter Reed Hospital, and literally hundreds of other *Post* special reports. Margot also mentioned that Julie received byline credit (along with reporters) for several of these *Post* articles. In a particularly memorable article published in 2003, Julie researched soldiers' "last letters home." Julie's assignment was to contact the families of soldiers who died in Iraq about the letters the family members received after their loved ones died. Julie shifted from her researcher status into that of a reporter. She phoned the families, expressed her concern, explained what she was doing for the *Washington Post*, and then asked if she could obtain copies of the letters. She must have done her assignment well. She got the letters. Later, other news organizations (*The New York Times*, National Public Radio

and HBO) published or aired similar stories.

Margot characterizes Julie as an "extreme researcher." She operates on a different level than most by becoming an "enterprise" researcher, one who doesn't wait for assignments but gets out in front of potential projects and lobbies effectively for them. Finally, Julie is not only talented, tireless and farsighted but respects reporters' confidences. Clearly, Julie is part of a long and distinguished list of stellar *Post* researchers.

Getting credits, bylines, and prestigious journalism awards for their research efforts did not come easily. Julie and her colleagues got the *Post's* recognition the hard way, by lobbying effectively for hard work very well done.

#### References:

<http://www.washingtoncitypaper.com/blogs/city-desk/2008/04/16/the-unsung-hero-of-the-washington-post/>  
<http://projects.washingtonpost.com/staff/articles/julie+tate/>

## The Ultimate Tour of Seattle

Continued from page 5

If your family's coming along for the trip - or if you're a nature lover yourself — head along the Seattle waterfront to the Seattle Aquarium. The sea otters are especially adorable. Or try the Seattle Center's Pacific Science Center, with plenty of hands-on science for all ages.

If you're planning to stay in Seattle through the weekend, you should get over to the funky Seattle neighborhood of Fremont for the annual Solstice Parade June 21 at noon; it's the closest Seattle ever comes to Mardi Gras. The parade organizers ban printed words or recognizable logos, animals and motorized vehicles; you won't see any marching bands, but we guarantee you'll see naked bicyclists.

And if you're planning a longer trip to Seattle after the convention, or expect to rent a car and get out of downtown, we recommend some extra reading:

- The *Seattle Times'* Seattle Guide at <http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/seattleguide/>
- Our guide to Washington state, including its national parks, at <http://seattletimes.nwsourc.com/html/washingtonguide/>

## The Wall Street Journal Library

Continued from page 8

City" and the possibility of an additional staff member. One project Norman hopes to undertake is the migration of the contacts in her Rolodex into a wiki which will serve as a central "source for information for library personnel." Norman has "also been told the library will have better 'real estate' on the intranet" and mentions the "possibility that the library will become part of a dedicated CAR (Computer-Assisted Reporting) group." The latter, Norman says, offers the possibility "of cross-training" and the opportunity "to produce a more robust information center."

# 2008 SLA Conference News Division Programs

## SATURDAY, JUNE 14

- ❖ 5:00 p.m. - 6:30 p.m.  
**Seattle Times Reception and Tour,**  
1120 John St.

## SUNDAY, JUNE 15

- ❖ 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.  
**News Division CE course**  
**Six Degrees of Separation:**  
**Mining Social Networks for News**  
**Research**  
**Room 303, Washington State**  
**Convention & Trade Center**  
*Moderator: Dana Gordon, Newsweek*  
*Research Center*  
*Speakers: Catharine Skipp, Newsweek;*  
*Meg Smith, Washington Post*  
*The course will teach new methods for*  
*researching social connections on sites*  
*such as Facebook and MySpace, and the*  
*importance of understanding how "Web*  
*2.0" social networking services must*  
*become a crucial part of news research.*  
*Attendees are expected to be familiar*  
*with standard public records databases*  
*used in the newsroom.*
- ❖ 3:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
**News Division Board of Directors**  
*Division Suite, Sheraton Seattle Hotel*  
*& Towers*
- ❖ 5:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.  
**SLA Opening General Session**  
*Vinton G. Cerf, Vice President of*  
*Google*
- ❖ 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.  
**News Division Mentor and**  
**Mentee Meet and Greet.**  
**Location: News Division Suite,**  
**Sheraton Seattle Hotel & Towers**  
*Sponsored by Heritage Microfilm.*
- ❖ 8:00 p.m. - 11:30 p.m.  
**News Division Networking**  
**Reception**  
**Location: News Division Suite,**  
**Sheraton Seattle Hotel & Towers**  
*In the Division Suite, Sheraton Hotel,*  
*Sponsored by Heritage Microfilm.*

## MONDAY, JUNE 16

- ❖ 7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.  
**Digital microfilm breakfast gath-**  
**ering in the News Division suite.**  
**Location: News Division Suite,**  
**Sheraton Seattle Hotel & Towers**  
*Enjoy a light breakfast while sharing*  
*conversation with news colleagues and*  
*microfilm vendors. Participating ven-*  
*dors: Heritage Microfilm, NewsBank,*  
*Northern Micrographics, and*  
*Proquest.*
- ❖ 9 a.m.- 10:30 a.m.  
**Digital microfilm road map**  
**Room 614, Washington State**  
**Convention & Trade Center**  
*Moderator: Mike Meiners, Director of*  
*Newsroom Administration, St. Louis*  
*Post-Dispatch*  
*Speakers: Andrea Vanek, Assistant*  
*Director of Newspaper Projects,*  
*California Newspaper Project; Sharon*  
*Clairemont, Director of News Research,*  
*Orange County Register; Vicky*  
*McCargar, Preservati Partners.*  
*Digital microfilm is a technology that is*  
*heating up. The options for newspapers*  
*have increased while the cost of convert-*  
*ing microfilm to digital has dropped.*  
*Case studies, guidelines and advice will*  
*be offered, providing news librarians a*  
*road map to their digital future.*  
*Sponsored by Heritage Microfilm,*  
*NewsBank, Northern Micrographics*  
*and Proquest.*
- ❖ 11 a.m.- 1 p.m.  
**SLA non-conflict time**  
*INFO-EXPO Hall*
- ❖ 1:30 p.m. - 3:20 p.m.  
**Technology free-for-all**  
**Ballroom 6E, Washington State**  
**Convention & Trade Center**  
*Moderator: Amy Disch, Library*  
*Director, The Columbus Dispatch*  
*Speakers: Derek Willis, Newsroom*  
*Developer, New York Times; Jessica*

*Baumgart, Quality Assurance Engineer,*  
*Renesis*

*A fast-paced session starring Derek*  
*Willis and Jessica Baumgart, two of the*  
*techno gurus in the News Division.*  
*Derek and Jessica will answer questions,*  
*prompt discussions and solicit demon-*  
*strations in this rapid fire exchange of*  
*ideas relating to the latest and greatest*  
*in library technology. Sponsored by*  
*Thomson/Dialog and Basch*  
*Subscriptions.*

- ❖ 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.  
**News Division Business Meeting**  
**Grandroom B, Washington State**  
**Convention & Trade Center**  
*Moderator: Justin Scroggs, News*  
*Division chair*
- ❖ 4:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.  
**News Division Board of Directors**  
**Grandroom B, Washington State**  
**Convention & Trade Center**
- ❖ 6:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m.  
**News Division Reception and**  
**Silent Auction.**  
*In the Division Suite, Sheraton Hotel,*  
*Sponsored by Proquest.*

## TUESDAY, JUNE 17

- ❖ 7 a.m. - 8:30 a.m.  
**News libraries 2.0**  
**Room 619, Washington State**  
**Convention & Trade Center**  
*Moderator: Julie Domel, News*  
*Researcher, San Antonio Express News*  
*Speakers: Amy Disch, Library Director,*  
*The Columbus Dispatch; David*  
*Milliron, Director of Media Services,*  
*Caspio; Lynne Palombo, News*  
*Researcher, Oregonian; Ann Holcomb,*  
*Newsroom Librarian, Kalamazoo*  
*Gazette*

*Constant changes in technologies are*  
*making it difficult to stay current with*  
*the tools we need to do our jobs.*  
*Learning about today's tools, such as*

*Continued on next page*

## 2008 SLA Conference News Division Programs

Continued from page 12

RSS newsfeeds, mashups, aggregators, blogs, wikis, instant messaging, del.icio.us, social networking applications and more, can be a daunting task. Practical advice will be offered in how to win the technological battle in your news library. *Sponsored by LexisNexis.*

❖ 9 a.m. - 10:50 a.m.

### UnSpun: Finding facts in a world of disinformation

Room 3AB Washington State Convention & Trade Center

Speaker: Brooks Jackson, co-author of "UnSpun: Finding Facts in the World of Disinformation."

Media audiences are spun by political parties and officials as well as various public interest groups and corporations. Jackson will discuss the tactics used by the "spinners" and why audiences buy into the spin. He will provide many recommendations for sources of reliable facts and offer proactive strategies people should use to ferret out the facts.

*Sponsored by Dow Jones.*

Shared program with the Government Division

❖ 11 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

### Using blogs, podcasts and news-groups for competitive intelligence research.

Room 603, Washington State Convention & Trade Center

Speakers: Cynthia Cheng Correia, Knowledge in Form, Inc., TBA

Cyberspace abounds with prolific bloggers and chatters; some of them may be (or know) your competitors. How can you identify and monitor reputable sources of information from the blogosphere? This session will highlight effective techniques and tools for mining blogs, podcasts, and newsgroups.

Shared program with the Competitive Intelligence Division. *Sponsored by Copyright Clearance Center*

❖ 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
SLA Non-Conflict Time

❖ 3:15 p.m. - 4:45 p.m.

### It's not your father's archive anymore.

Room 308, Washington State Convention & Trade Center

Moderator: Debra Bade, Editor, News Research and Archives, Chicago Tribune

Speakers: David Breslauer, MerlinOne; Katie Daugert, National Public Radio; Tony Dempewolf, NewsBank; Ron Larson, Wisconsin State Journal/The Capital Times; Leigh Poitinger, San Jose Mercury News.

PDF's, blogs, video, MP3, online material and more are grabbing our attention as archives expand and adapt to new demands. Practical advice will be shared in how to approach the changing landscape of archiving and the tools needed to do the job. *Sponsored by Preservati Partners.*

❖ 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.

News Division Awards Banquet at Rock Bottom Brewery, 1333 5th Ave. *Sponsored by NewsBank.*

## WEDNESDAY, JUNE 18

❖ 8 a.m. - 9:30 a.m.

### "There's gold in them thar files"

Room 619, Washington State Convention & Trade Center

Moderator: Sharon Clairemont, Director of News Research, Orange County Register

Speakers: Leigh Montgomery, Christian Science Monitor; Elaine Raines, Arizona Daily Star

In an era where news libraries are facing cutbacks in staffing and budgets, it's time to be proactive by showing management how news libraries are no longer a service department, but a profit-generating force. An important element of a profit-center includes being knowledgeable about rights and permissions and copyright. *μSponsored by Heritage Microfilm and 10k Wizard Technology*

❖ 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.  
SLA Non-Conflict Time  
INFO-EXPO Hall

❖ 12:15 p.m. - 1:45 p.m.

### The future of news libraries, part II

Room 608, Washington State Convention & Trade Center

Moderator: Elaine Raines, News & Research Services Director, Arizona Daily Star

Speakers: Nora Paul, Director, Institute for New Media Studies, University of Minnesota, and Katherine Long, Research Editor, Seattle Times

What have news libraries done to adapt to the changing information and news media landscape? Audience participation in the debate and discussion will be a vital part of the session as Division members set a course to the future of news librarianship. *Sponsored by Reference USA.*

❖ 2:00 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

### SLA Closing General Session

Seth Godin, author

❖ 5:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

### Conference-wide Party

Washington State Convention & Trade Center

## Notes from the Chair

Continued from page 4

this month's free seminar "Managing the Virtual Office", and other programming.

### Special thanks

Amy Disch for care and feeding of the division website.

Leigh Montgomery for meritorious service as NLN editor.

The 2008 NDiv Awards Committee: Jim Hunter, Leigh Montgomery, Alice Pepper, Jennifer Small Evert and Megan Waters.

Carolyn Edds, NewsLib umpire.