

CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS

Blogs, Social Networking and Databases, Oh My! Revisiting SLA's Trip to the Emerald City

BY CAROLYN EDDS, NEWS RESEARCHER, *ST. PETERSBURG TIMES*

A few days before the annual SLA conference was set to begin in Seattle in June, the *Seattle Times*' front page yelled "Colder than Siberia!" when temperatures couldn't get above the 70-degree mark. By the time conference attendees arrived, the weather, still cooler than normal, was a pleasant change for those from hotter climes, and the stereotypical Seattle rainstorm was a rarity.

The conference began with a tour of the *Seattle Times*. Library staff provided refreshments before herding us into an auditorium for a presentation on their intranet. Called the Café, it offers research tools, story budgets and request forms as well as a staff directory and a shared file for such things as the overnight note from the evening editors. In addition, it houses several databases with lookups, such as complaints filed against health-care practitioners, and databases they build themselves, e.g., a database of soldiers killed in Iraq. A section called the World Café has many country profiles, which include local resources and a list of staffers who speak its languages.

After the virtual tour of the intranet, we had a walking tour of the newsroom and the library, which shares an area with the investigative team. Although many of the newsroom staff have desks on the same floor, walls separate different departments from each other; several visitors remarked they would need a

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Seattle's iconic Space Needle has served as a symbol of the city since it was built for the 1962 World's Fair. PHOTO: JULIE DOMEL

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BY JULIE DOMEL

The last (and only other) time I attended an SLA conference was as a freshly-hatched news librarian back in 2001 when it was in San Antonio and practically on our paper's doorstep. Reading **Heather Cottle's** first-timer article in this issue brought back a lot of memories. I had no idea who I was as a professional then (forget sounding smart in the suite), and sessions were fitted around my research schedule. The conference was a blur, and I have only snippets of memories.

Seven years later, I traveled to Seattle with a wealth of experience behind me — fuel for intelligent conversations in the suite. I also hoped enough people would be awake at 7 a.m. on a Tuesday to learn a lot from my News Libraries 2.0 panel. I know I did! It is always wonderful to put faces to names and talk in person to people you have been e-mailing for years. If you were unable to attend, Carolyn Edds recounts the conference in the cover story.

While there were many conversations about downsizings and job freezes, sessions also showed that ever-resourceful news librarians are making lemonade from lemons. **Elaine Raines** is giving readers "Tales from the Morgue" and asking them to post their own photos on the *Arizona Daily Star's* website. Tech Tips columnist **Derek Willis** gently told a traditionalist at his session (with **Jessica Baumgart**) that it isn't a bad thing for librarians to pick up programming skills and move into the IT world. Heck, our newspapers are moving into that world whether we like it or not, so we must embrace it. I returned to San Antonio incredibly energized, and I am already trying to put some new ideas to work.

Librarians are like canaries in the coal mine. We must alert our users to what is coming; if we don't set the example, who will? In the suite, someone mentioned that the changes afoot in our industry today reminded them of the change from clip files to electronic archives. I know how much my duties have changed in the eight years I've been at the *Express-News*, and it seems as if the rate of change has gotten faster and faster.

I hope you enjoy this issue of *News Library News*, my first as editor. After **Barbara Semonche** reminded us on NewsLib of this publication's history, I felt a little more weight on my shoulders. Considering that my mother (my own managing editor) once said I couldn't use a semi-colon to save my life, please feel free to e-mail suggestions about content.

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NOTES FROM THE CHAIR



By JUSTIN SCROGGS

A round of applause, please, for **Ron Larson**, Division Chair-Elect, for planning and shepherding this year's conference program. Thanks also to the speakers, moderators and program monitors who helped make this conference one of the best I've attended. And a special thank you on behalf of the Division to our vendor sponsors without whom there would be no conference.

Each of the fifteen annual SLA confabs I've attended has had a different feel. Some years the feel is due to the conference location - Montreal, or the theme set by SLA. Other years it's a recurring theme - hotel fires, or a job change - "Yes, Ginny, I'll move to Atlanta." Many years, though, it's the personality and focus of the program planner that I remember about the conference. Past conferences planned by **Teresa Leonard** and **Michael Jesse** fall clearly into that category as does this year's Seattle conference.

The news industry is in a state of flux. No news flash there. But even with buyouts taken and layoff slips received, a basic optimism remains at the core of our profession. What we do makes a difference. By and large we love what we do. We'll continue to look for opportunities to be a positive force in our daily work.

It was that optimism, most certainly mixed with a sobering dose of reality, which came through loud and clear in the program Ron put together this year.

From the opening session on digitizing archives to the final session on the future of news libraries, News Division sessions were well attended. The topics were timely and the discussions were frank.

Being more horizontally gifted than vertically challenged, and having half-century old left-tackle knees, I no longer enjoy sitting on the floor for any length of time. But I'll admit it was fun and worth the ups and downs to sit near and observe our slightly warped, if clearly dedicated, blogging colleagues (you know who you are!) go about that business in the aisles and along the back wall when several sessions overflowed the allotted space. Of particular note this year was the larger number of attendees from outside the Division - e.g. the Future of News Libraries, Part II, final session / final day, where some of the more engaged participants were non-newsies. If you

haven't taken time to review the program notes and proceedings from the conference I encourage you to do so.

As I said last time in this space, this Division is yours, or perhaps better said, you are the Division.

Please be in touch

with your board. Let us hear from you, early and often. And when a member of the nominating committee calls - yes it's that time again - please consider saying yes!

“And when a member of
the nominating committee
calls - yes, it's that time
again - please consider
saying yes!”

Doing More Than “Just One Thing:” At *U.S. News & World Report* Innovative Content Management Impacts the Bottom Line



By HANNAH SOMMERS

Even before being interviewed for this profile, **Stephanie Salmon's** quick wit and vibrant personality came through in her e-mails. So, it was no surprise to learn that her innovations guide the way for others in the profession, and that her library's Scotch whisky-tasting party was a smashing success.

“It was all [Director] Jill [Konieczko]'s idea,” she says. “We were moving to new space” that was closer to the writers. “I don't think I have to tell you how journalists feel about scotch!”

Salmon came to *U.S. News & World Report* in 2005 looking for an internship (she graduated from The Catholic University of America that year). Instead, she was offered a part-time job cataloging books for the library collection, and was hired full-time in 2006. Her focus was on content services, and it is in this area that she continues to provide leadership — both within her organization as Deputy Director of Information Services, and in the profession as a member of the PRISM working group, among other activities.

“People here are starting to understand that content has a life after print and the web,” she said. “For example, it's not great if someone titles their podcast ‘Video Podcast Part One,’ so we get involved in working with the producers to help them understand why.” At *U.S. News*, the Information Services department



Stephanie Salmon is the Deputy Director of Information Services at *U.S. News & World Report*.

manages content licensing and all vendor feeds.

One of the biggest changes Salmon has experienced during her tenure is a shift away from librarians “doing just one thing.” She says a lot of this has to do with the kind of writers who are coming out of journalism schools, and a desire within Information Services to meet the information needs of the entire company — to expand beyond supporting solely editorial functions.

“We all do much more than one thing now,” she says. “We write for the web, for example. We also set up metadata models and the tagging engine for the CMS [web publishing system] and one of our librarians, Jenny O'Shea, manages the engine for that.... Also, as expert searchers, librarians understand a lot about search engine

optimization; other parts of the company are realizing this.” She commented that through the success of several important metadata projects, other departments increased their understanding of what librarians can do. “Now IT and Operations are coming to us to let us know about projects and getting us involved in the early stages.”

U.S. News librarians also attend daily editorial meetings, conduct new-employee orientations, provide deadline research for stories, sponsor regular brownbags and are involved with blogs, wikis and setting up RSS feeds. As for brownbags, Salmon commented, “social occasions are really important — we're big on treats around here. We have donuts every Thursday, and we try to maximize social connections.” She added that the library's

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PEOPLE



BY JENNIFER O'NEILL

Thanks to **Mike Meiners** for letting us know that **Louise LeGette** passed away on June 18. Louise had a long career that included the *Tampa Times*, *Tampa Tribune* and *Charleston Post Courier* libraries.

She also co-founded the Florida Newspaper Librarians Association with fellow South Carolinian **Bob Isaacs** and was awarded the Henebry award in 1989. She believed that libraries should be self-service and uncomplicated, and Mike says her clip files were by far the best he's ever seen. She gave him his first job in the news business and was a terrific mentor.

Louise's legacy continues to live on through her work. **Angie Drobnic Holan**, who is now a news researcher at the *St. Petersburg Times*, seconded Mike's tribute to Louise, even though the two never met. She remembers marveling over the top-notch condition of the paper clip files when she worked at *The Tampa Tribune*. **Buddy Jaudon** told her the files were a tribute to Louise. Angie says those files are tangible evidence of a librarian who cared deeply about people being able to find what they were looking for, even people she'd never meet.

Juanita Smith has joined *The Journal Gazette* of Fort Wayne, Ind., as photo librarian. She can be reached at juanita-smith@jg.net or 260/461-8456. This is her first newspaper job. She most recently served as medical reference librarian at The Medical Institute for Sexual Health in Austin, Tex., and has held several library positions in the Washington, D.C. area.

The Columbus Dispatch has a new librarian. **Julie Albert** started on May 19th. Julie holds a Master of Library and Information Science from Kent State University. Her e-mail address is albertj@dispatch.com.

Claire Giglio, Archive Supervisor for the *St. Petersburg Times*, will retire on August 29. Claire spent the better part of the past 20 years dedicated to the reliable and efficient archiving of photos and graphics. She instituted a digital archive for



Mike Meiners found this wonderful picture of Louise LeGette with Jim Scofield at SLA 1985 on the NewsLib website.

graphics in 1990, and spent every year since tirelessly working to maintain and improve the integrity of her archives through several migrations and countless technological changes.

The intensity of her devotion to image archiving was matched only by her commitment to taking good care of the people she supervised. Her most recent accomplishment, the creation of a clean and easy to use PDF archive, is a fitting example of her desire to create a comprehensive record of the published output of the *St. Petersburg Times*.

Claire is looking forward to her wedding in September and embarking on her honeymoon to Hawaii, one of only ten states she has yet to visit. She plans on volunteering to help the local historical society set up an image archive and intends to offer her considerable archiving skills as an independent consultant for hire. She can be reached via e-mail at cmoorgig@tampabay.rr.com.

John Jackson, who was a research librarian for the *Los Angeles Times*, has moved back to Atlanta to work as the business research librarian for Sutherland L.L.P., a major law firm. Before working in L.A. he was a librarian at *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution* from 1994 to 1999 and interned at the *Palm Beach Post*.

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Blogs, Social Networking and Databases, Oh My! Revisiting SLA's Trip to the Emerald City

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Miyoko Wolf of the *Seattle Times* shows visitors the "News Library" ... where the investigative team works. PHOTO: CHRIS HARDESTY

map to find their way around. Some staffers are fortunate to have a view of the water and can watch seaplanes come in and out.

On Sunday, the CE course was held in the afternoon, giving the twenty CE course attendees a chance to sleep in or take a quick tour of the city. The CE course, titled "Six Degrees of Separation: Mining Social Networks for News Research," was very informative. **Meg Smith** from *The Washington Post* talked about the advantages of external search engines, and showed some examples about how Web sites such as Facebook had been used to gather information for stories. She also talked about the value provided by different social networking sites. **Catharine Skipp** from *Newsweek* taught the class virtually; she could be heard on a telephone as attendees watched her presentation on a screen.

On Sunday evening, the traditional gathering for newcomers was held in the suite and, once again, **Shira Kavon** did an excellent job arranging mentors and mentees ahead of the conference. A small group gathered that night in the News Division suite, which was sponsored by Heritage Microfilm. Although Shira had only four matches made before the conference, a couple of other newbies showed up in the suite and received a mentor on site.

Conference attendance was lower this year. The official count from SLA had 117 News Division members attending the conference. I learned from Ron Larson these numbers from previous years: 2006 had 237 attendees, 2003 had 243 attendees and 2000 had 258 attendees. However, in 2002, 142 division members traveled to Los Angeles for the SLA conference.



Carolyn Edds, *St. Petersburg Times*, welcomes her mentee, Katie Daugert, National Public Radio. PHOTO: ALICE PEPPER

On Monday, the News Division topics ranged from digitizing microfilm to a technology free-for-all and ended with the business meeting. **Andrea Vanek** from the California Newspaper project told attendees about the project. They have 8,925 California newspaper titles cataloged, and 1.5 million pages have been microfilmed so far. Newspaper pages from 1897 to 1910 for six states and the District of Columbia and more information about the project can be viewed at <http://www.loc.gov/ndnp/>. **Sharon Clairemont**, Orange County Register, discussed a road map towards digitizing microfilm. Her discussion outlined the items to consider from thinking about the need for digitizing to proposing a plan to protecting material passing out of copyright. Her presentation included a chart useful for comparing vendors.

In the Technology Free-for-All, **Jessica Baumgart**, Renesys, and Derek Willis, NYTimes.com, went back and forth sharing information about various Web tools and sites and invited people from the audience, which was seated in the round, to come up and share one of their favorite sites. Tools and sites discussed included a widget for downloading Web sites, the Times/Machine (70 years of the *New York Times* archives), a Royal Canadian Mounted Police graves database, Twitter and the SLA Innovation Laboratory.

The reception on Monday evening, sponsored by ProQuest, was well-attended and the silent auction was successful in raising money for the News Division. Silent auction winners took home books, blankets, pictures, a lamp and many more items. Thank you to those who sent items in for the auction. Also, a shout out to **Peter Johnson** for collecting all the auction payments and suite fees, to **Chris Hardesty** for rounding up the winners and to the others who helped make the auction a success.

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BY DEREK WILLIS
THE NEW YORK TIMES

For those of you who work on or contribute to your organization's intranet, how many times has this happened to you:

You: "OK, I finished making the changes you wanted on that page."

Boss: "Um, can you go back to the way it was?"

You: "Why, you sure, absolutely!"

There is a solution for this, and it doesn't involve threats or actual physical harm. It's called version control, and you are probably more familiar with it than you think.

Version control is a key part of any software development, because its basic task is to track changes to specific files. It's such a good idea that some newspaper editing systems have similar functionality built in - you can revert to a previous version of a story if the changes don't go well.

Once you start using version control software, you will quickly see how valuable it can be to you. For example, by placing a folder or set of files under version control, you are able to see a history of changes to each file, including when the change was made and the difference between any two versions. Think of the "History" page of any Wikipedia entry.

Here's how it works: you start by downloading version control software. Many

choices exist, but for the sake of simplicity, I'll use a popular one, Subversion, as an example. You can find it at <http://subversion.tigris.org/>, and downloads are available for Windows, Mac OS X and other operating systems.

Once you've installed Subversion, you don't need to move your existing files. You just create a repository (the place where Subversion keeps its master files) on whichever machine you've installed the software, which might be your desktop or perhaps the intranet server. That command would look like this:

```
svnadmin create c:\files\code
```

Then to add content to your new repository, you issue an `svn import` command from the directory that contains the files you want to add, like so:

```
svn import my_directory c:\files\code  
\my_files -m "Initial import"
```

See that last part? That's just a message that Subversion logs so you can add a human explainer to the action you are undertaking. It can be very helpful to be able to browse the log and see meaningful messages. You can add changes without a message, but I don't recommend it.

Once your files have been added to the repository, you then can work on those files just as you always have. The only difference is that now you have a series of Subversion commands that can tell you whether you

have made changes and what those changes are. And, if you accidentally delete your local files (or, like me, change them so much that you want to throw them away), you can get a fresh copy from the repository.

Each change you commit to the repository increases the version number; your initial import is version 1, the first change makes version 2 and so on. You can refer to specific versions to see changes or reverse changes.

I can't tell you how often version control software has saved me time and worry. What I can tell you is that it's not always the easiest thing to pick up. But Subversion, in particular, has many users and even a free book online for using it (at <http://svn-book.red-bean.com/>). Your company may already have Subversion or another version control system in place; use what's easiest for you. Just use version control if you can.

Oh, and our example from the beginning? If you had those files under version control, and the "way it was" was version 75 and the new version is version 80, just issue the following command:

```
svn update --revision 75
```

Presto - you are back to the way it was. Wouldn't you rather spend time doing things, rather than undoing them?

For a fuller explanation of how libraries can use version control, read Daniel Chudnov's article, "Better, Faster, Stronger: Version Control for Everybody" in the June issue of *Computers in Libraries*.

People

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Richard Geiger and a friend and SLA colleague, Tim DeWolf, composed and recorded a song to encourage SLA members to learn Web 2.0 technologies. The song is "23 Things," (a takeoff of the Four Preps' song "26 Miles Across the Sea"). The song with video was played at the first general session at the SLA Annual Conference and is featured on the "23 Things" web page at <http://wiki.sla.org/display/23Things/>. You can see Richard in the photos. He also sings lead and plays banjo.

The address is <http://wiki.sla.org/download/attachments/8355864/23Things.wmv?version=1>. It's well done and really worth taking a look at if you haven't yet.

Richard Drezen has taken a voluntary buyout from *The Washington Post*, effective May 30, 2008. He was employed by *The Washington Post* for 14 years as a research librarian, with a focus on business and financial news. He was based for the past 8 years in the paper's New York City bureau and intends to stay in the NYC metro area exploring new options with the hope of continuing his career as a professional

researcher. Most importantly, he will continue to be an active member of SLA and the News Division. He can be reached via e-mail at rsdrezen@hotmail.com or by phone at 917/721-3465.

Dana Gordon, former Professional Development Chair for the Division, has left the *Newsweek* Research Center where she was the deputy director, specializing in technology projects. She can be reached at danagor@gmail.com and through Facebook and LinkedIn.

Gloria Zamora, 2008 SLA President-Elect, Outlines Agenda for Members, Answers Questions

By LEIGH MONTGOMERY

Who are SLA members? What do people outside the organization think of them? Who will be the future members? Are CEOs - decision makers - aware of the organization? What do they think about it?



Gloria Zamora, 2008 SLA President-Elect

Gloria Zamora, the 2008 Special Libraries Association President-elect, is emphatic that these questions will be answered during her three-year term, which begins in January 2009. In July, the SLA Boston Chapter hosted Zamora at an informal Dine-Around event for members to meet with Zamora and network with one another, and she discussed what's next for the organization.

While SLA is a truly international information association - the only one in fact, Zamora informed members that there are plans for further expansion, with initiatives to concentrate on Japan, Spain and Australia, in addition to strengthening its profile in existing industries and chapters, to "move to the next level, and help us move forward." A centennial year celebration for SLA in 2009 will be an opportunity to do just that.

Zamora, of Sandia National Laboratories in Santa Fe, N.M., has three decades of experience in the information industry and 27 years as an SLA member. As government affairs manager at Sandia Labs, she tracks and analyzes federal legislation. She is currently working as the congressional fellow and field representative in the Office of Sen. Jeff Bingaman, (D-N.M.). Zamora kindly agreed to take some

additional questions via e-mail about what she's working on, the News Division, and what members can do to make a difference:

What's the biggest issue you are addressing?

The biggest issue that SLA is focusing on at this time is the alignment project. For almost 100 years, SLA has served as the leading association representing special librarians and information specialists around the world. As SLA prepares for its second century of service, it does so amid sweeping technological changes that are not only reshaping the information industry, but redefining the role that the Association and the profession will play in the future.

The need to generate a sharper focus on the perceived value of the Association and the profession is even more pressing as SLA prepares for its centennial in 2009. This significant milestone provides a unique opportunity to establish a shared vision for the future and the role of information professionals in it.

To respond effectively, SLA has embarked on a thorough examination to bring clarity and unity to the core identity and values of the Association and the profession. We are working with a multidisciplinary team of research and communication professionals, led by the international communication firm, Fleishman-Hillard, and supported by futurist Andy Hines of Social Technologies and the information analytics firm, Outsell Inc.

This alignment project will not only help refine our current positioning in the marketplace, but provide a framework for discussing the inherent value in the profession and the Association in a clear, compelling and cohesive voice.

What are you working on right now?

President Stephen Abram and I agreed that we needed to make some changes in order to fully utilize the skills and dedication

of the members of our board of directors while moving toward a more seamless and cohesive way to get the important work done year after year. This shift in duties includes the President-elect position, as it is one that serves on the board for three years. We need to sustain initiatives and discover ways to institutionalize the great work that is accomplished with each administration, so I am actively working on projects now that will be carried through for three years.

We are building on the membership initiatives of Past President Rebecca Vargha and Stephen's innovation initiatives this year. To this end, I have taken on an introspective look at the Board and how it functions. The workload has increased for the cabinet chair and chair-elect for divisions and chapters. The increase in workload is due, in part, to the development of the Leadership Summit in January and Leadership Development Institute (LDI) at the annual conference. These chair positions need additional help and resources. Also, the cabinet chair and chair-elect positions are the only board roles that are two-year terms; other board roles are three-year terms.

I requested that the Board look into the various board offices and increase the chapter and division office terms to three years, thus providing additional support for leadership development. At the same time, realizing that the Board with 15 members is optimally-sized, the Board decided to reduce the number of directors from six to four. This enhancement requires a bylaws change that will come to the membership in the fall. I believe these changes will enhance the effectiveness of the Board.

Are there any short-term or long-term issues you would like to focus on, or members to focus on?

Short-term, I would like our members to

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Blogs, Social Networking and Databases, Oh My! Revisiting SLA's Trip to the Emerald City

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Attendees were up early on Tuesday morning to discuss more technology tools at the 7:00 a.m. session titled "News Libraries 2.0," moderated by **Julie Domel**, *San Antonio Express-News*. **Amy Disch**, *Columbus Dispatch*, talked about RSS feeds. *The Oregonian's* **Lynne Palombo** discussed blogs and social networking. **Anne Holcomb** of the *Kalamazoo Gazette* spoke about Google Maps and Mashups. **David Milliron**, Caspio, ended the session with an overview of his company and its products.

The following session, "UnSpun: Finding Facts in a World of Disinformation," was titled after a book written by the speaker, Brooks Jackson. He discussed tactics used by spinners, such as political parties and officials, public interest groups and corporations. He gave recommendations on some sources to use for reliable facts and suggested strategies to use to determine the facts.

The last morning session of the day was shared with the Competitive Intelligence Division. Cynthia Cheng Correia of Knowledge in Form discussed using blogs, podcasts and newsgroups for competitive intelligence research. Attendees then wandered down to the INFO-EXPO for a box lunch and a chance to network with colleagues.

After lunch, **Debra Bade**, *Chicago Tribune*, moderated "It's Not Your Father's Archive Anymore." The focus of this session was archiving information in different formats such as video, blogs and MP3s. MerlinOne's David Breslauer gave a demo of Merlin 5, and discussed some of the issues involved with archiving different types of formats. **Katie Daugert**, National Public Radio, showed off a project on clas-



The division's last session at the conference was a lively discussion about the future of news libraries. PHOTO: ALICE PEPPER

sical music she did for the NPR Web site. The pages include audio files as well as information about the artists, such as interviews and profiles, news and concerts. **Chuck Palsho**, Newsbank, updated us on some of the company's projects related to newspaper archives. **Ron Larson**, *The Capital Times*, discussed archiving the Web amid some of the changes at his organization. **Leigh Poitinger**, *San Jose Mercury News*, talked about archiving PDFs, outtakes and video and the issues involved with archiving those formats.

Attendees then headed to the Rock Bottom Brewery for the annual awards banquet organized by **Peter Johnson**. It was a beautiful evening as colleagues got a chance to catch up with each other, share some good food and drinks and watch the award presentations. **Justin Scroggs**, Newsbank, presented the Ralph J. Shoemaker Award of Merit to **Jim Hunter**, *Columbus Dispatch*, in absentia, for the completion of his term in office as program and division chair. **Amy Disch**, *Columbus Dispatch*, presented the Vormelker-Thomas Student Award to **Heather Cottle** of the

University of Missouri. Two people received the Agnes Henebry Roll of Honor award this year. **Chris Hardesty**, Hardesty Consulting, presented one award to **Leigh Poitinger**, *San Jose Mercury News*, and **Justin Scroggs** presented the other one to **Carolyn Edds**, *St. Petersburg Times*. Justin's presentation duties were not finished yet. His final presentation and the final award, the Joseph F. Kwopil Memorial Award, went to **Ginny Everett**, *Atlanta Journal-Constitution*.

On Wednesday morning, the topic of discussion was about earning money in the news library. **Leigh Montgomery**, *The Christian Science Monitor*, talked about using the archives to increase traffic to the Web site. She discussed a few examples of how the library packaged older clips on their website with audio materials. Since March 2007, they have seen a 33% increase in sales of historic content. **Elaine Raines**, *Arizona Daily Star*, talked about a "Critters of Southern Arizona" database on their Web site. She also discussed the Tucson Time Capsule project which repurposes file photos.

Continued on next page

2008 SLA Conference: A First-Timer's Experience

By HEATHER COTTLE

When I entered the INFO-EXPO exhibit hall at my first SLA Annual Conference in June, my first thought was: Who knew a group of librarians would be so loud? Sure, it was a very big group of librarians - about 5,000 - but I was still surprised by the noise and activity.

In the previous weeks I had gathered several tips about navigating the conference from my boss, University of Missouri librarian **Dorothy Carner**, as well as from Information Outlook. I had brought lots of paper to take notes, worn comfortable shoes, and packed lots of layers to accommodate fluctuating temperatures in the conference center. I'd read the latest SLA publications and scanned the NewsLib list-serv so I would have things to talk about with the people I met. I'd studied the schedule and circled the conference sessions that I couldn't miss.

One thing I did not anticipate, though, was the energy level at the conference. There were so many people and so much going on that, I have to admit, I was pretty overwhelmed. At first, I just walked around and tried to take everything in. Before long, I got the feeling that the conference was going to be a lot more exciting than I expected.

For those whom I didn't get to meet in Seattle, I am a library science student at the University of Missouri in Columbia and a research assistant the MU Journalism Library. I received my undergraduate degree in journalism in 2007, and I would love to use both of my degrees by pursuing a career in news librarianship. Before SLA 2008, I had never been to any kind of library conference. I was pumped up about meeting news librarians and learning about the profession.

The information sessions certainly didn't disappoint me; in fact, they exceeded my

expectations. The first one I attended, "A Digital Microfilm Roadmap," focused on a topic I had thought I knew something about. I soon realized, however, how much I had to learn about converting microfilm to digital formats. I was a bit lost at first, but the case studies and further explanation made it all come together. Other sessions, such as the Technology Free-For-All and "UnSpun: Finding Facts in a World of Disinformation," introduced information that was completely new to me. Perhaps the most educational of all was the News Division business meeting on Monday afternoon. It allowed me to see how the Division operates as well as "who's who." Seeing the business take place right before my eyes helped me understand it better than a plain old explanation ever could have.

As great as the sessions and meetings were, the thing about the conference that really stuck out to me was the amazing people I met. No one looked down on me for being a student or made me feel silly when I asked questions. Everyone was friendly and helpful, willing to assist me in the short-term (getting as much out of the conference as possible) and the long-term (finding a job after I graduate).

Amy Disch guided me before the conference, patiently replying to my e-mails full of questions about what to wear to the News Division banquet, what to say in my Vormelker-Thomas Award speech and which sessions to attend. **Chris Hardesty** introduced me to the ProQuest representatives, whom I needed to thank for their co-sponsorship of my award. Without Chris, I couldn't have picked them out of the crowd or felt comfortable approaching them. Along with Dorothy (my boss), **Nina Johnson** from the *Columbia Missourian* took me under her wing, helped me figure out where to be and introduced me to people, even though she didn't know me very

well before we became travel companions at the conference. Numerous News Division members made me feel welcome and gave me their business cards so I could contact them in the future. These things: networking, socializing and learning from great news librarians from all over the country, are what I'll remember most about the 2008 SLA Annual Conference. I am so grateful to the News Division, especially those on the awards committee, for sponsoring the Vormelker-Thomas Award that made it possible for me to attend and to have such a remarkable experience.

Blogs, Social Networking and Databases, Oh My! Revisiting SLA's Trip to the Emerald City

Continued from previous page

The final session of the conference, "Future of News Libraries," included a roundtable session moderated by **Elaine Raines** with speakers **Katherine Long**, *Seattle Times*, and **Nora Paul**, Institute for New Media Studies, University of Minnesota. Nora compared reporters' job descriptions from many years ago to today, showing how responsibilities have increased. They are now expected to report for the Web site as well as the print product, gather audio and perhaps video. She discussed the role of the librarian as a communitarian. Attendees broke into small groups to talk about questions sent out before the conference. Then, Nora, Katherine and Elaine led a thought-provoking discussion before everyone said goodbye and many headed off to the airport.

The questionnaire, presentations, handouts and photos, are available on the Seattle conference page of the SLA News Division Web site at <http://www.ibiblio.org/slanews/conferences/sla2008/index.htm>.

Annual Business Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 16, 2008
Washington State Convention & Trade Center, Seattle, Washington

IN ATTENDANCE

News Division Executive Board members:

Justin Scroggs, Chair;
Ron Larson, Chair-Elect;
Amy Disch, 2009 Program Planner, Secretary, Webmaster;
Peter Johnson, Treasurer;
Dana Gordon, Director-Education/ Professional Development;

Other members and guests.

Board members not present:

Jim Hunter, Past Chair;
Victor Black, Director of Publications

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Justin Scroggs called the meeting to order at 3:42 p.m.

Justin mentioned that the previous Board Meeting minutes are available in the Summer 2007 issue of *News Library News*, which can be found at <http://www.ibiblio.org/slancws/nln/nln07/nln294.pdf>

Justin welcomed all the attendees to this year's conference and offered thanks to Chair-Elect **Ron Larson**, who planned this year's Division programming, Director-Education/ Professional Development **Dana Gordon** for this year's CE Course, Six Degrees of Separation: Mining Social Networks for News Research and **Peter Johnson**, who planned this year's awards banquet at the Rock Bottom Brewery.

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPORTS

CHAIR-ELECT - RON LARSON

The 2008 SLA conference News Division programs include 8 sessions, 1 breakfast meeting and the business meeting.

Two of the sessions were shared with other divisions. They were:

1. UnSpun: Finding facts in a world of dis-information. Shared with the Government Division.

2. Using blogs, podcasts and newsgroups for competitive intelligence research. Shared with the Competitive Intelligence and Pharmaceutical divisions.

The five-day conference began with a tour and reception at the *Seattle Times*.

Sponsors of the News Division sessions included: ProQuest, NewsBank, Heritage Microfilm, LexisNexis, Basch Subscriptions, Northern Micrographics, Thomson Reuters, Preservati Consulting, ReferenceUSA, Copyright Clearance Center, Dow Jones and 10k Wizard Technologies.

The News Division events also included the Mentor and Mentee Meet and Greet in the Division suite; the silent auction in the Division suite; and the annual awards reception and banquet, this year held at the Rock Bottom Brewery.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Larson

2008 News Division Chair-elect

TREASURER - PETER JOHNSON

On April 30, 2007 the Division had a checking account balance of \$33,728.74, representing the latest reconciled bank statement received prior to the 2008 annual conference business meeting plus several un-reconciled deposits (including a \$3,250 sponsorship from Heritage Microfilm, the annual dues allotment of \$5,628).

There are three outstanding checks: one in the amount of \$1,500 for the Vormelker-Thomas Award, another for \$705 for CE speaker airfare and hotel costs, and one other in the amount of \$650 for layout of the Spring issue of *News Library News*, which reduces the balance to \$30,873.74. Payments received for 10 awards dinner tickets not purchased via SLA registration are not included in this total.

This balance also includes:

- * \$1,074.20 held on behalf of the Florida Librarians' News Group.
- * \$4,687.47 designated for the C.B. Hayden Fellowship.

for an actual balance of uncommitted funds of \$25,112.07.

In April, the Division received its annual membership allotment from SLA in the amount of \$5,628.00. The allotment is computed at \$12.00 per division member as of Dec. 31 each year, which calculates to a Division membership of 469. The allotment does not include new 2008 members who were processed in 2007, but members who have selected the Division as an extra unit are included in the total.

Expenses yet-to-be-paid for this year's conference will include (but are not limited to):

- The News Division Suite at the Sheraton Hotel.
- Housing for the division chair.
- Awards banquet food and drink.
- AV charges.

Income yet-to-be realized includes:

- The silent auction.
- Suite fees.
- Awards dinner tickets sold through the division and via conference registration.
- One or more outstanding sponsorships.

A concerted effort has been made this past year to:

- Reduce expenses (including efforts to hold down AV costs, a slightly-less-fancy but no-less fun awards dinner, and only 2 nights in the suite).
- Increase conference sponsorships, a task at which Ron Larson has proven quite adept.
- Make the silent auction and the collection of suite fees as successful as possible, as they are a major source of income for the division.

To effect a smooth transition to **Megan Waters**, the Division's new treasurer, I will close the existing checking account based in Washington, D.C., and she will open a new account in Florida. This will be accomplished as soon after the 2008 conference as possible.

Respectfully submitted,

Peter Johnson

Treasurer, News Division

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Annual Business Meeting Minutes

Continued from previous page

PAST CHAIR/AWARDS - JIM HUNTER

Jim was not present and there was nothing to report.

SECRETARY - AMY DISCH

Amy had nothing to report.

DIRECTOR-EDUCATION/PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - DANA GORDON

Dana reported the success of the Sunday CE course, Six Degrees of Separation: Mining Social Networks for News Research. The speakers were **Meg Smith** of *The Washington Post*, **Catherine Skipp** of *Newsweek* and **Jim Marcus** of Leadership Directories, Inc.

DIRECTOR OF PUBLICATIONS - VICTOR BLACK

Victor was not present and there was nothing to report.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

ARCHIVES - KEE MALESKY

Kee was not present, but offered the following report—

Dear Officers and Chairpersons of the News Division:

I'm sorry that I can't be at conference this year, but as the new Archivist for the division, it's my responsibility to remind you: it's time to collect material from the past year. According to SLA's "Practices for Division Archives," -

The archives should contain only materials of genuine historical importance. These are of two types, evidential and informational. Evidential records document the life span of the organization - its organization and development, its functions, and its activities. Informational records simply provide information; the only standard for retention of this type of record should be uniqueness.

Please e-mail or snail mail to me any documents from the past year that we should preserve; if in doubt, send them anyway. Let me know if you've already sent material to our

previous "Guardian of the Past," **Teresa Leonard**, and I can coordinate with her.

Thanks in advance for your help. And I'm sorry I won't see you all in Seattle, but I'm really looking forward to next year's conference in Washington, D.C., for the 85th anniversary of the News Division! We're already thinking about how to use the Archives to celebrate our division's glorious history.

Cheers,

Kee

BROADCAST - SHIRA KAVON

Dear Officers and Chairpersons of the News Division:

The following is a brief report on the Broadcast News Group of the News Division and its plan for an informal get-together at the SLA 2008 Conference in Seattle, WA.

I was asked by **Kee Malesky** (at the 2007 Conference in Denver), if I would assume the Chair of the Broadcast Group after she decided she wanted to serve as News Division archivist. The change in chairs was approved by Jim Hunter.

An e-mailed invitation was sent to the entire Newslib list on May 20, 2008 inviting Broadcast News Librarians to write whether they would be attending the 2008 conference and might be available for an informal meeting, and to identify themselves as potential targets for future e-mails on topics of interest specifically to them (such as meetings during the course of the year).

Thirteen NewsLib subscribers (excluding CNN Librarians) responded initially, several saying they would not be able to attend the conference but wanted to be kept up to date on future developments. My colleagues at CNN simply waited to respond until plans for a get-together were firmed up just before the conference. On June 11, 2008, I e-mailed the list I had compiled indicating the date and time of the get-together. It will take place on Monday, June 16 at 10:30 a.m. The group that will meet on that date includes, in no particular order:

Beth Shankle, National Press Club; Nancy Quade, ABC News; Katie Daugert, National Public Radio; Wendy Clark, MLIS Student, Univ. of Washington; Michele Melady, CBC; Sandi Fox, PBS Jim Lehrer NewsHour; Ryan Engel, CNN-Atlanta; Jennifer Acorn, CNN-Atlanta; Susan Bennett, CNN-Atlanta; Caitlin Stark, CNN-Atlanta; Susan Kipp, CNN-NY; Abigail Brigham, CNN-NY; and myself, for a total of 13.

Respondents to the initial e-mail, but not attending the conference, are one other student, and employees of Fox News and NBC News.

The get-together will take place at Tully's Coffee nearby the conference hotel. After our discussions take place and the minutes are compiled, I will file an addendum to this report.

Respectfully submitted,

Shira Kavon

Broadcast News Chair

SLA News Division

FIRST TIMER/MENTOR/MENTEE - SHIRA KAVON

Dear Officers and Chairpersons of the News Division:

The following are the vital statistics regarding the Mentoring Program for the SLA 2008 Convention in Seattle, WA.

An e-mailed call for mentors and mentees was sent to the NewsLib list on May 4, 2008, with a deadline for requesting a mentor or volunteering to mentor of June 1, 2008.

Several News Division veterans and first-timers responded to the call. We had the fortunate circumstance of having more mentors offer their services than were needed this year. I want to thank **Bobby Schrott** of Nexis for volunteering his services, though they were not put to use.

In Denver in 2007, we were privileged to have **Gary Price** offer his mentoring services and I think the trend augurs well for the offers of mentoring we make. Not only are the mentees eager, but we get eager mentors who are willing to take time from their busy schedules to be helpful to our newest conference-goers.

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Annual Business Meeting Minutes

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Mentor-mentee matches were e-mailed to the attendees on June 2, 2008.

The following are the mentor-mentee matches for the 2008 Conference:

MENTEE - **Lindsey Knight**,
Pricewaterhouse Coopers

MENTOR - **Jessica Baumgart**, Renesys

MENTEE - **Hillary Pittman**, *Tulsa World*

MENTOR - **Leigh Poitinger**,
San Jose Mercury News

MENTEE - **Beth Shankle**,
National Press Club

MENTOR - **Amy Disch**,
The Columbus Dispatch

MENTEE - **Katie Dugert**,
National Public Radio

MENTOR - **Carolyn Edds**,
St. Petersburg Times

MENTEE TOTAL: 4

MENTOR TOTAL: 4

Festivities for Mentors and Mentees are planned for the News Division Suite on the night of Sunday, June 15 at 7:30 p.m. It is hoped a good time will be had by all.

Respectfully submitted,

Shira Kavon

Mentoring Maven

SLA News Division

MEMBERSHIP CHAIR - ANNE HOLCOMB

Anne said there were difficulties getting firm membership numbers from SLA.

2009 PROGRAM PLANNER - AMY DISCH

Amy spoke of next year's SLA conference, which will be held June 14-17 in Washington, D.C. The conference's theme is "From Information to Inspiration: Knowledge & Vision for the Next Century" and going from that theme, SLA is looking for programs that are geared toward looking at the future, specifically how information delivery will evolve and the role information professionals will play in it.

Amy attended a planning meeting in

January in Louisville, Kentucky at the mid-winter meeting and also attended a meeting on Saturday here in Seattle. If you have ideas for the conference, please contact Amy. The deadline for submitting the division's preliminary program is August 1, 2008.

Amy says there are ten available program slots including the Business meeting and two to four of those must be shared with other divisions.

TELLER/ELECTIONS - LYNNE PALOMBO

OLD BUSINESS

In November 2007, 703 ballots were mailed to the members of the News Division; 31% responded. In January of this year I announced our new officers. They are:

Chair-Elect-Elect: Amy Disch

Treasurer: Megan Waters

Education/Professional Development

Director: Jessica Baumgart

Congratulations to our new officers.

NEW BUSINESS

Due to the costs and labor of putting together an election, and because the news division embraces technology, we will be moving to an electronic ballot this year.

SLA provides two options for an electronic election.

1. Survey Monkey (free, SLA login required).

2. Votingondemand.com (discounted rate). Based on our current membership, I am estimating that our election would cost no more than \$550. This figure was determined via the company's Web site.

A decision on which option will serve the division best has not been made. I welcome any comments that our membership has regarding either vendor.

SLA has provided me with contact names and login information for both vendors. I will explore the specifics further when the date of our next election is closer, unless there are any objections.

Our next election is scheduled to proceed as soon as a slate of candidates is selected in the fall.

WEBMASTER - AMY DISCH

Amy said she is doing her best to post conference presentations on the Web site as soon as possible after the respective presentations. She also said selected presentations are being recorded and the audio will be available on the 2008 conference page of the News Division's Web site. Amy's tenure as Webmaster ends after the conference. She thanked the division for giving her the opportunity to serve the past two years.

The new Webmaster is **Alice Pepper** of *The Detroit Free Press*. Amy congratulated Alice on her new role and presented her with the "infamous" beanie.

NEWSLIB LISTSERV

Listsrv administrator **Carolyn Edds** said there are currently 1,119 list members.

NEW BUSINESS

Justin Scroggs moved that we accept any new business. The motion was seconded and approved.

Justin presented the gavel to Chair-Elect **Ron Larson**, who will become News Division chair in January 2009.

Kate Arnold addressed the meeting about the possibility of the division offering stipends to European librarians and/or students wanting to attend the 2009 conference in Washington, D.C. Kate mentioned that the location is ideal and it would be nice for the division to offer foreign librarians and students the opportunity to attend SLA's centennial conference.

Carolyn Edds said she is starting an oral history project to capture the memories of longtime News Division members. Her hope is to post these interviews on the News Division's Web site.

OLD BUSINESS

Justin Scroggs asked for any old business.

A motion was made to adjourn and the meeting ended.

Respectfully submitted,

Amy Disch

News Division Secretary

Gloria Zamora, 2008 SLA President-Elect, Outlines Agenda for Members, Answers Questions

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focus on the centennial and how the individual units will celebrate this momentous event by honoring the past and celebrating the future of the Association and the profession. But the short-term celebration and events will hopefully lead the units and our membership to a long-term outlook and action plan that will demonstrate the value and advantages that SLA provides to our members, prospective members and the profession.

What are your impressions of the News Division?

The News Division, one of SLA's largest divisions, is one of the most respected in the Association. The programming is always innovative and the News Division provides excellent mentors for their members. It is attractive to members outside the news field and that is how it sustains a healthy division.

What is one thing the average member could do to make a difference for SLA this year?

There is no such thing as an average member of SLA. That is what is so wonderful

about our association. Our membership has such a richness of diversity. I would like to see each member think about how to engage other professionals in related information fields in their chapter and division programs. SLA has an abundance of talent in our members and in our staff that can be leveraged to benefit others in related fields.

Likewise, I believe that other non-traditional information professions would broaden our outlook and provide us insight into the information field. I would ask that our chapters think about who in their communities they could appeal to with their programming and reach out to those groups through joint programs or invitations to SLA meetings.

Divisions can do something similar in their conference programming if they are looking for the new technologies or ideas that will interest others outside their own membership and then actively market to other related groups to point out the advantages of aligning with SLA. Reaching out to those in related information fields or specialties will enrich SLA members, but also enhance the information profession.

Doing More Than "Just One Thing:" At U.S. News & World Report Innovative Content Management Impacts the Bottom Line

Continued from page 5

low-walled cubicles facilitate socializing, and that one should not underestimate the value of keeping a well-stocked candy dish: "People come by for a piece of candy and end up telling you about a story they're working on."

Jill Konieczko, Director of Information Services, cites Salmon's "big-picture perspective and enthusiasm for organizing information" as an inspiration to her peers. One of the most critical projects Salmon has worked on was a major data migration from Cuadra STAR to an Artesia digital asset management system. She worked on the metadata model so that the PRISM standard could be adopted.

"One of the things I'm really proud of is how quickly we're able to turn our content around," Salmon says. "This is a business goal that we're meeting. PRISM is making an impact on the bottom line, and our ability to turn things around quickly helps us get other partners interested."

"This is an exciting time for us," she says, "we're not constrained and Jill is very entrepreneurial about serving the whole company."

As for the future of news libraries?

"I think the future of news libraries could be bright, but there's a need to redefine what we do. We need to look outside the traditional research roles — of course, there will always be a need for research since there's just so much information out there and a lot of it is bad. But don't discount the possibilities for us in managing content well, and the tremendous impact of that."

SAVE OUR HISTORY!

Carolyn Edds and Kee Malesky (News Division Archivist) are organizing an Oral History Project, to collect and preserve the memories and insights of our members, starting with retired members and award winners. We hope to have something to present at next year's SLA Conference (as part of the celebration of our 85th Anniversary), and eventually to create a "history module" for our web site. Anyone who would like to get involved should contact Kee (kmalesky@npr.org) or Carolyn (ufriverat@gmail.com) with your ideas and suggestions.