COORDINATOR'S MEMO

To: SRRT members

From: John Sheridan, Action Council Coordinator

New York has traditionally been a good place for SRRT meetings. There are lots of socially responsible librarians within commuting distance and others have friends or family (like me) with whom they can crash. This helps, because in libraryland, as elsewhere, those pulling down the biggest salaries often don't have as much trouble putting up with social irresponsibility.

Remember, Action Council meetings are open, but there is also the annual SRRT Membership meeting, where you probably won't be asked to introduce yourself!

A hallmark of SRRT is responding rapidly to situations. Not knowing what might be happening on several fronts by the time we meet, there is not a set agenda at this writing. Some topics receiving continuing attention will be the Strategic Long Range Plan (I can't resist any longer; I thought that 7-11s were the place to go for SLRP-ees), minority recruitment, the "Lacy Report" on free and equal access, the New York Public Library Guild's project on Nicaraguan libraries, and the cosponsorship with the Feminist Task Force of a 1987 workshop on working together across racial lines.

SRRT is, in the spirit of "Forging Coalitions for the Public Good," cosponsoring a program which ASCLA's Library Services to Prisoners Forum organized. It is called "Patrons in Crisis: Where They're Coming From, Where We're Sending Them--A Call for Library Intervention." Speakers include E.J. Josey and Mitch Snyder of the Community for Creative Non-Violence. It will presented on June 29 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

This is my chance to acknowledge the service of Action Council members whose terms are up. Barbara Levinson has been tireless in her efforts on the Membership Committee. Nancy Gruber's conscientiousness led her to resign earlier this year since her travel to Europe causes her to miss two conferences. Such consideration marked her able service on Action Council, which included a hitch as treasurer.

See you in NYC!

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CORETTA SCOTT KING AWARD BREAKFAST

Tickets are available for a breakfast honoring the winners of the 1986 Coretta Scott King Award. The breakfast will take place in the Astor Ballroom of the New York Marriott Marquis Hotel, on Tuesday, July 1, from 7:30 to 9:00 a.m.
Virginia Hamilton, author of *The People Could Fly: American Black Folktales* (Knopf) and Jerry Pinkney, illustrator of Valerie Flournoy's *The Patchwork Quilt* (Dial) will receive awards for their contributions to literature on the black experience published during 1985. Mildred Pitts Walter, author of *Trouble's Child* (Lothrop), Virginia Hamilton, author of *Junius Over Far* (Harper), and Leo and Diane Dillon, illustrators of *The People Could Fly* will receive Honorable Mention certificates.

Tickets to the breakfast are available in advance by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope and a check for $18.50 (payable to ALA/SRRT CSK Award Breakfast) to: Marguerite Dodson, Programming Services, Brooklyn Public Library, Grand Army Plaza, Brooklyn, NY 11238. Checks must be received by June 10; no refunds will be made after this date. Tickets will also be sold at the conference meal ticket desk through June 29. There will be no ticket sales at the door.

The Coretta Scott King Award is administered by the Coretta Scott King Award Task Force of the ALA Social Responsibilities Roundtable.

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ALTERNATIVES IN PRINT TASK FORCE

We are looking for people who would be interested in working on the next edition of *Alternatives in Print*, which last appeared in 1980. This would or could entail a variety of activities, including writing off to publishers for catalogs, collecting catalogs at different functions (possibly in an area of interest to the individual), or inputting information into a computer. Come join the discussion on editorial guidelines, volunteering, and on how to get involved in this exciting project. Anyone who is interested in helping out should come to the task force meetings at ALA or write to one of the co-coordinators: Cathy Seitz, University Libraries, Miami University, Oxford, OH 45056; or Daniel Tsang, Social Sciences Librarian, Main Library, University of California, Irvine, CA 92713. Anyone who has any catalogs of materials that we may want to include in AIP can send them to Cathy Seitz.

Our business meetings are slated for Saturday, June 28 (11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.), Monday, June 30 (11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.), and Tuesday, July 1 (9:30-11:00 a.m.). Join us!

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MEETINGS

Listed below are the SRRT meetings that had been scheduled at press time.

Friday, June 27
4:30-5:30 p.m. Peace Info. Exchange
Saturday, June 28
9:30am-12:30pm Peace Info. Exchange TOUR
9:30-11:00 a.m. Action Council Feminist Task Force
11:30am-12:30pm Intl. Human Rights Alternatives in Print
2:00-4:00 p.m. Peace Info. Exchange PROGRAM
8:00-10:00 p.m. Gay Task Force

Sunday, June 29
8:00-9:00 a.m. Peace Info. Exchange
11:30am-12:30pm Action Council Alternatives in Print
2:00-4:00 p.m. Feminist T.F. PROGRAM Intl. Human Rights Library Union T.F. PROGRAM Alternatives in Print PROGRAM
4:30-5:30 p.m. Library Union T.F. PROGRAM Peace Info. Exchange PROGRAM

Monday, June 30
9:30-11:00 a.m. Gay Task Force Alternatives in Print Feminist Task Force
2:00-4:00 p.m. Intl. Human Rights joint meeting
4:30-5:30 p.m. Peace Info. Exchange PROGRAM

Tuesday, July 1
7:30-9:00 a.m. Coretta Scott King Award BREAKFAST
8:00-9:00 a.m. Feminist Task Force
9:30-11:00 a.m. Coretta Scott King Award T.F. Alternatives in Print
11:30am-12:30pm Action Council and SRRT MEMBERSHIP
2:00-4:00 p.m. Gay T.F. PROGRAM

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

Science to take a stand against apartheid and questioning its membership in IFLA if it does not. The IHRTF will meet Saturday, June 28, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in preparation for a joint meeting on Monday, June 30, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. with the International Relations Committee, Intellectual Freedom Committee, and International Relations Roundtable. The task force will also meet on Sunday, June 29, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. and will visit the New York headquarters of several human rights organizations on Tuesday afternoon, July 1. For more information, write IHRTF chair designate Corinne Nyquist, Sojourner Truth Library, State University College, New Paltz, NY 12561.

** GAY TASK FORCE **

This year's ALA conference meets the same weekend as the celebrations commemorating the Stonewall uprising, so library workers--lesbians, gays, and their friends--plan to march in New York City's gay pride parade. Come join us on Sunday, June 29. For details, watch for notices at the convention.

On Tuesday, July 1 (2-4 p.m.), five lesbian and gay publishers and distributors will speak on "Getting the Word Out: Linking Up with Libraries." Featured will be: Betty Powell, of Kitchen Table: Women of Color Press (P.O. Box 2753, New York, NY 10185); Nancy K. Bereano, of Firebrand Books (141 The Commons, Ithaca, NY 14850); Sue Brown, of Ladyslipper Inc.: Records and Tapes by Women (P.O. Box 3130, Durham, NC 27705); Terry Helbing, of Gay Press of New York (P.O. Box 294, New York, NY 10014); and Norman Laurila, of A Different Light Bookshop (548 Hudson St., New York, NY 10014). The Task Force on Alternatives in Print is co-sponsoring the program.

Come prepared for a lively and entertaining event, together with a display of
literature from the lesbian and gay communities. If you can't make the program, write away for their catalogs. We need to support our own presses!

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CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

Steppingstones Press will be publishing tributes to the artistry and literary contributions of Gwendolyn Brooks and John A. Williams. Poetry, essays, fiction, and drama for, about, or inspired by these two writers are welcome.

Gwendolyn Brooks is the poet laureate of Illinois and a member of the American Academy and Institute of Arts and Letters. She is the author of fifteen books and editor of two anthologies. Among her many awards is the Pulitzer Prize for poetry. The deadline for submissions for her special issue is July 10, 1986.

John A. Williams is the author of seventeen novels, among which are Sissie, Click Song!, and The Man Who Cried I Am. He has been a foreign correspondent for Newsweek and currently is a professor of English at Rutgers University. The deadline for submissions for his issue is September 10, 1986.

Steppingstones welcomes and encourages unsolicited materials from both established and new authors. Only new material will be considered. The criteria for publication will be purpose and literary merit. All materials submitted should include a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Recently published issues include "Amiri Baraka: the Kaleidoscopic Torch" ($10), "Malcolm X: a Tribute" ($5), and the first anniversary issue ($6). Authors published in the Baraka issue include Allen Ginsberg, Arnold Rampersad, Eugene Redmond, D.H. Melhem, Ted Wilson, and William J. Harris.

Margaret Walker and Ralph Ellison will be the focus of tributes to be published in 1987. A "Liberation Issue" is also planned for the summer of 1987.

To submit materials, obtain copies, or for more information, write to Steppingstones, P.O. Box 1856, New York, NY 10027, or call (718) 474-5063 (James Gwynne).

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CLOSE ENCOUNTERS: LIBRARIANS AND THE DISABLED

What is your attitude to disabled patrons? Many of us probably have a mild attack of anxiety when we see a blind person entering the reference area, however hesitantly or boldly. We wonder whether to rush forward and offer assistance, or hang back, frightened of a scene or a rebuff for intruding on this person's independence. Our feelings of uncertainty are exacerbated by our belief that as public service professionals we should be aiding all patrons. Our dilemma is that, although we are perfectly competent at aiding a "normal" patron, we are unsure to what extent additional help is appropriate for a disabled one. Indeed, the amount of assistance that any patron requires will vary enormously from case to case.

Some librarians admit to their unease about the disabled; most of us do not. Not only do we frequently have doubts about how to deal with disabled patrons, we also have more problems with certain categories of disability than with others. My guess would be that most of us find the blind to be the most intimidating. We are so highly conditioned to look at a person's face, and particularly at their eyes, for a reaction to what we are telling them that we find the "gaze" of a sightless person unnerving.

The federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 mandated equal rights for the disabled in all institutions receiving any federal
funding, and that applies to the vast majority of libraries. However, in most of our institutions the disabled do not receive equal treatment. We know, when we think about the physical conditions in most of our libraries, that space and financial constraints often bar them from access to the resources and facilities that our other patrons enjoy.

Disabled people feel uncomfortable about venturing into most libraries. Our facilities often make it physically impossible, or at least emotionally daunting for them. The blind are probably the most vulnerable, because without someone there to read for them they are immediately helpless. The vast majority of library materials are only accessible to the sighted. For the wheelchair-bound, most of our buildings are probably a nightmare, with narrow aisles between book stacks, high shelves, and awkward card catalog drawers.

In fact, relatively few disabled patrons venture into our libraries at all. Many prefer to gain knowledge or information by less intimidating means, such as reading textbooks or listening to their readers or cassette tapes from the Library of Congress or other sources. It is a great pity, as libraries have so much to offer the disabled. For the sighted disabled it is often only a matter of knowing how to use "the system," and where to ask for assistance in retrieving materials. For the blind and partially sighted, many libraries, including my own, provide special facilities with talking book machines, print enlargers, tape recorders, and other such devices, perhaps even a Kurzweil Reading Machine which converts printed text into speech. Yet these technological aids are often underutilized. There seem to be several reasons for this. Sometimes potential users are not even aware that such equipment is available. Many of them have their own tape recorders and therefore do not need to come to the library to use our equipment. The new generation of technology to assist the blind, such as the Kurzweil reading machine, was expected to bring many more of them to the library, but this does not seem to have happened. The Kurzweil now has an easily understood voice synthesizer (I, for one, could not understand the original), and much improved reading capabilities, but it is still not as easy and flexible to use as that traditional method—the human reader. It cannot be transported, nor can the machine be made to repeat a paragraph or move to a new page as quickly as a reader can. However, it can provide the blind with the gift of independence, since a trained user can utilize it at any time without needing someone else's assistance. I believe that the Kurzweil machine will be used a lot more when its ability to read noncirculating library materials, such as newspapers and dual-columned periodicals and books, is improved. As the price drops, it will probably also be used much more as a personal tool.

Do libraries have any role to play in the lives of the disabled, and do they need our assistance at all? I believe that the answer to both questions is yes. We probably serve the disabled better than we think we do. The fact that disabled people do use libraries suggests that we have something to offer them. Perhaps many more would use them if they knew what resources we have available for them. They may not even be aware of any arrangements that we have for retrieving and copying materials or helping them with research. Perhaps publicity is the answer. Not only would this inform potential patrons about our collections and services, but it would also make them feel more welcome in our libraries. Orientations could be arranged which would help the disabled learn to find their way successfully around our buildings, getting to know the collections and equipment. Even more important, we would get to know each other.

You should not feel awkward with the disabled. Just offer assistance as you
would to anyone else. You may offer to guide a blind person or push a wheelchair, but this may not be necessary. Most disabled people will not hesitate to ask for help if they need it and will indicate how it can be given. Whatever the person's disability, always talk directly to that person, not to the person who may be with him or her. Finally, try to get around any architectural barriers that your building may impose.

I am back to my opening question: what is your attitude to the disabled? Librarians themselves are probably the ultimate barrier to their successful utilization of libraries. If their encounters with us are positive and we assist them to find the information that they need, they will be among our most satisfied and enthusiastic patrons. -- Christine E. King, State University of New York at Stony Brook Library.

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PERIODICAL REVIEW


"Produced by community artists for community artists," Community Murals delivers both a visual and political knockout. The magazine, devoted to creating "an art of high quality which is freely accessible to the people in their movement against racial, sexual, and economic oppression," has promoted truly powerful, grassroots public art through reports and essays on billboard "correction," radical sculpture, graffiti, batik, artists' rights, poster projects, and international (but especially Mexican and Chicano) muralism; through notes on useful print and AV resources (e.g., the Women Artists Slide Library and Paper Tiger video series); through news about organizations like Performing Artists for Nuclear Disarmament and the Chicago Mural Group; through interviews with activist artists such as Arnold Belkin and Jorge Infante Correa; and, overwhelmingly, through the abundant black-and-white photos of actual works. Indeed, it's the graphics that stir and inspire, extending the magazine's appeal well beyond community artists and art historians. For instance, who wouldn't be moved and informed by Domingo Ulloa's bold yet dignified "Short-handled hoe" and "Working man's solidarity," his angry and searing "Racism," "Armed Scabs," and "Painters on strike," and deeply compassionate "Braceros," all reproduced in the spring 1985 issue? Or by "Tools for Peace," a monumental call for non-intervention in Central America

VIDEO REVIEW

We're Not Gonna Take It. 1/2-inch VHS, color, 15 minutes. Directed by Pamela Yates. $40 (institutions), $20 (individuals). National Rank & File Against Concessions, c/o United Steelworkers of America, Local 7263, 312 21st St., Newport, MN 55055.

The seven-month-old strike against the Hormel Company of Austin, Minnesota, has electrified the American labor movement. This fifteen-minute documentary, directed by Academy Award nominee Pamela Yates, tells the story of United Food and Commercial Workers Local P-9's fight against a concessionary contract. Interviews with the local's leaders and members, footage of the picket lines and the National Guard escorting strikebreakers into the plant, coverage of the historic national rally on February 15, and a perfect selection of background music makes this documentary come vibrantly alive. This video's importance goes beyond the strike at Hormel and raises issues of importance about the state of the entire labor movement in this country. This is a timely and excellent choice for all libraries.-- Mary Rosenthal, Duluth Public Library. (This review originally appeared in Choice).

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that highlights the winter 1985 number? Community Murals, in short, convincingly demonstrates that art and politics can unite to make a world that's not only more just but also more beautiful. For art and contemporary culture collections, as well as most public, school, and academic libraries. -- Sanford Berman, Hennepin County Library, Minnetonka, Minn.

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ALA PART OF NUCLEAR INFORMATION NETWORK

ALA is one of 60 national organizations that belong to a coalition called Citizens Against Nuclear War, or CAN. Since 1983 CAN has regularly provided its member organizations with educational materials on the nuclear arms race. It also acts as the eyes and ears for its member organizations when nuclear arms issues come before Congress.

CAN is now offering ALA members a program called Peace Education Networks, or PEN. This offer includes a one-year subscription to Nuclear Times magazine and six legislative alerts yearly. Nuclear Times, as many librarians know, reports in highly readable form on the struggle to prevent nuclear war, emphasizing activities within the anti-nuclear movement. The legislative alerts will inform you of pending arms control legislation so that you have the opportunity to take action. The cost of joining CAN's Peace Education Network is only $10 a year. If you're interested, please fill out the form below and send to CAN.

TO: Citizens Against Nuclear War
1201 16th St., N.W.
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 822-7483

I would like to join CAN's Peace Education Network and receive a one-year subscription to Nuclear Times and six legislative alerts a year on issues related to nuclear war. My $10 payment is enclosed (please make checks payable to Citizens Against Nuclear War).

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