FROM THE PRESIDENT

By Mitch Stepanovich, stepanov@flash.net

It seems at times as though organizations have a life of their own. They can develop such inward momentum that it appears that things are happening for the good of the organization. It's almost like watching thunderheads boiling in the sky on a summer afternoon; a lot of activity but no visible direct impact. Occasionally I wonder if LIRT appears that way to its membership - many committees and officers, much activity at conferences and in between. Important, yes, and necessary to keep the organization moving forward but what are the rest of our members getting in return for their dues?

For those that want active involvement there are many opportunities to participate in committees, serve as officers, and attend programs and activities at conference. For those that for one reason or another cannot be as actively involved I want to point out three additional significant ways to benefit from LIRT membership: the LIRT News, LIRT-L, and the LIRT web site.

We each receive this outstanding newsletter that is full of useful information. It contains reports to keep us informed of other instruction related activities, summaries of conference programs that we might be unable to attend, lists of other instruction related literature that we can pursue for further learning, and details on individuals we can contact for additional information. Many hours of preparation go into creating this acclaimed publication. I personally have referred to both current and past issues on many occasions.


By Gale Burrow, Past President, gburrow@rocky.claremont.edu

During 1998-99, LIRT has continued to be an effective advocate for library instruction in all types of libraries through our liaison efforts, program, and publications. Organizationally, we have made some changes and planned for others that will provide us with a solid base for future endeavors. This year, for the first time in ALA history, LIRT and other Round Tables were able to elect ALA Councilors. Having Round Table Councilors is truly recognized that Round Tables are an integral part of the Association.

LIRT has been given a Council seat of its own because we are one of the largest ALA Round Tables (1122 members in 1999). Tim Grimes, a Past President of LIRT, was elected to serve as our first ALA Councilor. Mitch Stepanovich, LIRT Vice President/President-Elect, continued to represent LIRT on the Institute for Information Literacy Board. Linda Goff, LIRT Secretary, was elected by the Round Table Coordinating Committee as one of two Round Table members of the 2001 ALA Conference Coordinating Team.

We have the LIRT-L discussion list, and although it is not very active it is an avenue that can be used to pose an informal question or thought to an immediate group of colleagues, or to carry on an informal discussion. Yes, we also have BI-L, but aren't there are times when you might not want the entire library instruction world listening?

The LIRT web site at <http://diogenes.baylor.edu/Library/LIRT> has many links and useful features designed with LIRT members in mind. Online issues of this newsletter dating back to June 1985 can be found here. Also here is a description of and information on how to subscribe to our LIRT-L discussion list. Have you been wondering how you could better evaluate your instruction efforts?

LIRT's book on Evaluating Library Instruction is described here. Ever wonder where you can easily find leads to library instruction tutorials on website evaluation criteria, or on evaluation of resources, or on designing tutorials? Have you had a need to contact colleagues at other state or regional library instruction organizations? It's all here, and more, at our LIRT web site.

My question to you: are there other things LIRT could be doing to make your career in library instruction more meaningful? For example, is there a need among our members for assistance or guidance in the process of publishing? Would a LIRT speakers list be useful? Any other ideas you might have? Let me know what you think on these issues at stepanov@flash.net.

Mitch Stepanovich is Architecture Librarian at the Architecture Library, University of Texas at Arlington.

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From the Editor:

It is a privilege to serve as the new editor of this wonderful publication and I look forward to assisting in the dissemination of the wealth of information that it provides. I wish to express my admiration for the excellent work of the outgoing editor, David Sherwood. The standards he and the production editor, Jana Edwards, established are a solid foundation upon which LlRT News will continue to grow and thrive.

As I worked on my first issue, the generosity and talent of the contributors inspired me as they shared valuable information gained through practical experience. Without their collaboration, the newsletter would not be the valuable resource that it is today.

This issue contains the following nuggets of gold collected from the ALA '99 Annual Conference, as well as articles developed especially with you, the library instructor, in mind:

- A report and corresponding web links from the LlRT '99 Annual Program: Technology in Action: Getting the Most from Your Electronic Classroom, highlighting design considerations and teaching hints for computer classrooms.
- A bibliography focusing on technology, the web, and instruction.
- A review of software that enables instructors to create class web pages without knowledge of HTML or web programming languages.
- An article about instructional challenges faced by multitype library systems.
- A collection of teaching tips about using instructional technology.
- An article exploring a number of avenues that will help you get up to speed and stay current with Internet search engines.
- News from and about LlRT's meetings and membership, as well as non-LlRT reports from the ALA '99 Annual Meeting.

I hope you enjoy this issue and find its contents useful as you pursue your day-to-day instructional activities.

-- Barbara Cressman

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1999-2000 OFFICERS, APPOINTED OFFICERS, COMMITTEE AND TASK FORCE CHAIRPERSONS

LlRT OFFICERS

President - Mitch Stepanovich
Assistant Treasurer/Treasurer Elect - Carolyn Strickland
Vice President/President Elect - Allison Armstrong
Immediate Past President - Gale Burrow
Secretary - Jana Edwards
LlRT ALA Councilor - Tim Grimes
Treasurer - John S. Spencer

LlRT APPOINTED OFFICERS

Archivist - Kari Lucas
Publicity Coordinator - Vanessa Burford
Electronic Resources Manager - Billie Peterson
ALA LlRT Liaison Officer - Lorraine Swader
LlRT News Production Editor - Jana Edwards

LlRT COMMITTEE & TASK FORCE CHAIRPERSONS

Computer Applications Committee - Haiwang Yuan
Literacy Assembly - Carole Hinshaw
Conference Program 2000 - Anne Houston
Long-Range Planning Committee - Marsha Forys
Conference Program 2001 - Cynthia Akers
Newsletter Committee - Barbara Cressman
Continuing Education Committee - Mary Ellen Leverence
Organization and Bylaws Committee - Gale Burrow
Elections Committee - Elizabeth Margutti
Public Relations/Membership - Pixey Mosley
Five Year Financial Planning Subcommittee - Barbara Pilvin
Publications Committee - Patience L. Simmonds
Instructional Materials Editorial Board Liaison - Carol Penka
Research Committee - Gina Persichini
Liaison Committee - Ed Tallent
25th Anniversary Task Force - Diana Shonrock

Please see <http://Diogenes.Baylor.edu/Library/LIRT/directory.html> for address information.

Approved Bylaw Changes

The approved amendment proposed that a new section be added to the bylaws as follows:

A. The Executive Board may create appointed offices. These offices will be filled by the Board following a call for volunteers. Vacancies will be filled in the same manner.

B. Persons filling these offices will serve for two years initially and will by mutual agreement be renewed thereafter on an annual basis.

C. Appointed officers are non-voting members of both the Executive Board and the Steering Committee. Each appointed officer may also be an ex-officio member of an appropriate committee.
Technology in Action: Getting the Most From Your Electronic Classroom

By Anna Houston, annsmh@umich.edu

On the morning of June 27, 1999, LIRT presented its annual program at the New Orleans Marriott. "Technology in Action: Getting the Most from Your Electronic Classroom," was attended by approximately 200 ALA conference attendees and received excellent reviews.

The program was designed to address the pressing issues of electronic classroom design in its relationship to teaching methods. Now that more institutions are gaining facilities for hands-on teaching, how do we optimize the use of these facilities? How can we best design a space for learning? And, how should we change our teaching methods? Possible answers to these questions were offered by two presentations, followed by poster sessions.

The program began with Michael Miller, Director of Information Services at the Media Union, University of Michigan. During his presentation, "Design Considerations for Computer Classrooms," he discussed some practical issues in the design of electronic classrooms. He began by defining possible types of learning rooms: i.e. hands-on labs as well as classrooms. A well-designed classroom can be used as both a lab and a demo room.

Basic requirements for students using a classroom, Miller said, are that they can easily see and hear the instructor, and are physically comfortable. Physical comfort can be affected by temperature, air flow, comfort of chairs, and position of keyboards. Instructors have similar needs, as well as the need to easily control the room's technology, and access to adequate technological support before and during the class.

Few Librarians will be given the opportunity to design a room from scratch, but will inherit an existing room to turn into a classroom. Whenever possible, the room should be oriented so that the doors are at the rear of the room, avoiding disturbance by exits and entrances. Screens and whiteboards should be placed so that whiteboards can be seen if the screen is down. A matte finish whiteboard can double as a screen. Whiteboards, rather than chalkboards, should be utilized to avoid harming electronic equipment with chalk dust. The instructor's station should be placed so that it blocks neither the screen nor the instructor.

Miller also gave advice for the design and placement of furniture, showing several diagrams of existing rooms as examples. In general, furniture should be placed to facilitate communication and collaboration. For example, the instructor should be as close to the students as possible, and eye contact should be enhanced by using recessed monitors. Room lighting should be designed to reduce glare and windows should be blacked out. Dimmers or appropriately placed accent lights can also reduce glare. Lighting controls should be placed where the instructor can easily access them while teaching.

Hardware considerations should include plans for the effective distribution of wiring, adequate technical support, and the regular upgrading of equipment. When choosing a projection system, consider resolution, portability, and brightness. The placement of the projector in the rear of the room is optimal. Teaching is also enhanced by using a system that enables the instructor to control the students' use of the computers. A control system allows the instructor to see what each student is doing, or to determine exactly what each student will see on their screen.

The second speaker, Gale Burrow, Coordinator of Library Services at the Hennold/Mudd Library, The Claremont Colleges, spoke about "Learning to Teach in the Learning Room." Burrow began by asking the audience to write down a few issues that they have encountered when teaching in an electronic classroom. A number of issues were raised, both practical and theoretical.

When building an electronic room, Burrow stated that librarians should consider teaching issues as well as design issues. When Claremont gained a new electronic teaching room, librarians found that expectations had changed. Classes needed to involve less lecture and more student involvement, but not all librarians were sure how to accomplish this.

To aid librarians, the instruction team created a five-part exercise for use in freshman classes: 1. students create a research statement or question, 2. they identify types of information needed, 3. they select appropriate resources, 4. they use the databases, and 5. they select and retrieve sources. The exercise is designed to allow teaching flexibility. Parts 1-3 can be assigned before class, or worked during class. The librarian can mix lecture and hands-on in different combinations. During the exercise, librarians were given step-by-step directions for using the learning room's capabilities. Finally, evaluations were sought from faculty, students and librarians, and possible ways to improve the exercise were identified.

At the conclusion of the two presentations, attendees were invited to stay and visit the poster sessions. Poster sessions were presented to illustrate the myriad ways that different libraries have used technology in a library classroom setting. Presenters and topics included:

- Cynthia Akers, Emporia State University, "Get it in Writing: Policies and Procedures for Library Electronic Classrooms"
- Gale Burrow, Claremont Colleges, "Learning to Teach in the Learning Room"
- Barbara Cressman, Eastern Illinois University, "Shopping for Hardware/Software: Where to Go for Product Info"
- Mark Christel, Hope College "A Room of Our Own: Developing an Instructional Space That Really Works"
- Robert W. Femeke, University of South Carolina, Aiken, "Going Beyond Generic Browsers: The Next Step"
- Stephanie Michel, Radford University, "The Audience Is Listening: Using COMWEB to Enhance Teaching and Learning in the Electronic Classroom"
- Trisha Stevenson, New York University, Melinda Baine, Pepperdine University, and Elizabeth Parang, Pepperdine University, "Redesigning Freshman Seminar Library Instruction"
- Ru Story-Huffman, Cumberland College, "Take This Exit: Teaching With the World Wide Web"

continued on page 10...
LIRT COMMITTEE REPORTS
ALA ANNUAL CONFERENCE 1999, NEW ORLEANS

Computer Applications
The committee decided to continue to contribute software reviews to each issue of LIRT News. Committee members volunteered to write reviews for the remaining issues this year. The committee is developing a bibliography for this year’s Annual LIRT Program. We submitted a revision of the Computer Applications Committee charge.

Continuing Education
The committee discussed the 1998 LIRT’s Top 20 list and made preliminary organizational plans for the support of the 1999 LIRT program.

Election/Nomination
The committee developed a list of potential candidates to be contacted for year 2000 slate. It was decided not to include a page for nominations in LIRT News. We will work with Organization and Bylaws and Public Relations Committee to develop a list of potential candidates based on past committee membership.

Liaison Committee
The chair handed out the Historic List of LIRT Programs, the State and Regional LIRTs, and the Meeting Report Forms. Members (and incoming members) volunteered to attend meetings and then report for the newsletter. Discussion about LIRT goals and how we could direct our efforts ensued. The list of programs could be put on our website to help state LIRT’s developing programming. Contact with them could also give other ideas. Contact with NMRT was also brought to our attention.

Long Range Planning
The committee discussed the ways in which LIRT could be more forward-thinking and expand our links to other like groups - specifically Public Library Association and School Library Association. Two recommendations were made, which Alison will forward to Steering. Diana gave a brief report on the status of the 25th Anniversary celebration.

Newsletter
We spent most of our session discussing the contents of upcoming issues (v. 22, no. 1 and v. 22, no. 2). We continued our discussion of the possibility of creating detailed tip sheets to guide contributors in writing several different kinds of articles. We discussed long-range planning committee proposed goals and decided that our existing goals could be adjusted to coincide with the proposed goals with little difficulty.

Organization and Bylaws
The committee decided to work with the Elections Committee to update list(s) of active members. Bylaws change on appointed positions was formulated and revised following input from the Executive Board. Suggestions for procedures of updating the Manual were discussed. A method will be tried for the coming year.

1999 LIRT Conference Program
6/26/99 We finalized assignments and preparations for 6/27 programs. We welcomed a new member (1999-2000).

6/28/99 We had a debriefing about the concluded LIRT program for 1999. It was a great success. Particularly pleasing was the poster session that occurred. We read the evaluation forms.

Conference Program 2000 Committee
We discussed ideas for the 2000 Conference Program, and we decided on “Teaching as Performance.” This program would focus on practical teaching techniques learned from the fields of acting, public speaking, etc. Speakers might include a librarian with acting skills, a professional actor, or an expert on public speaking. We might include a section on presentation skills, particularly pleasing was the poster session that occurred. We read the evaluation forms.

Publications
1) Discussed the possibility of publicizing and marketing the latest project of the committee, “Publications Opportunities Outside of the Library Field” was discussed and decided to publish both in paper and electronically.

2) Preparation of LIRT Publications list was discussed.

3) The mission and objectives minutes were approved and Patience Simmonds was unanimously approved as the candidate for the 1999-2000 year chair.

See the web edition of the LIRT News for committee membership.

Non-LIRT Meeting Reports
- AASL President’s Program: “Everyone Teaches, Everyone Learns: Brain-based Teaching Strategies for the Library Media Specialist.”
- ACRL Alliances for New Directions in Teaching and Learning Discussion Group Sunday
- ACRL/EBBS Instruction for Educators Committee
- ACRL Instruction and Distance Learning Sections Program: “Nothing But Net?”
- ACRL/ILS Continuing Education Conference
- ACRL/ILS Emerging Technologies Committee
- ACRL/ILS Policy Committee
- ACRL/ILS Revision of Model Statement Task Force
- ACRL Task Force on Information Literacy Competency Standards
- School Partnership Discussion Group
- Training & Delivery: CLENE’s Trains Your Trainers, a Pre-Conference Workshop

Non-LIRT meeting reports are available in the web edition of the LIRT News.

Reporters: Angela Dunnington, Mark Horan, Ellen Kessler, Kay Sibleman, Trisha Stevenson, Ed Tafelton, David Ward, Dane Ward and De lineage Wetz. 

Public Relations/Membership
The status of the following activities were reviewed: LIRT Exhibit Booth, Bites with LIRT Luncheons, LIRT message to listserves and NMRT outreach. Each was going well. Booth boxes lost in 1991 were delivered to the booth this year. Some initiatives with NMRT were passed on to the Liaison Committee. The new chair will be Pixie Mosley, and she will need more members responsible for Member A-LIRT.

Research
1) The committee reviewed “Teaching Tips” brochures that were completed and printed in June. We were pleased with them and will make them available in PDF format by having Billie place them on the LIRT web site. Barb Cressman will obtain the files so that each brochure can be published in the LIRT newsletter.

2) The LIRT library instruction tutorials will continue to be maintained by the research committee and reviewed (and revised as necessary) on a quarterly basis.

3) Our newest project on creating a distance education program for your library’s instruction program is moving forward.

LIRT News, September 1999

See the web edition of the LIRT News for committee membership.
Instructional Challenges Faced by Multitype Library Systems

Multitype library systems often encounter instructional challenges that are unique to library consortiums. The Lincoln Trail Libraries System (LTLS) is a multitype library serving 121 member libraries in nine counties in east central Illinois. The system serves seven academic, 53 public, 44 school, and 17 special libraries. As part of its instructional function, LTLS delivers continuing education and training courses to librarians and staff from these libraries.

LTLS continues to offer a wide variety of courses covering diverse areas of interest. These courses are selected based upon the needs of member libraries. LTLS assists in arranging for a variety of continuing education instruction in areas such as trustee education (aimed at public and school trustees), family literacy training, multimedia selection and management, adult programming in libraries, and grant writing.

LTLS also presents training courses in the area of automation. This often introduces the age-old instructional challenge of offering training to people who have varying levels of knowledge and experience. LTLS tries to address this challenge by gearing courses to a variety of skill levels. For example, basic courses are offered in the areas of reference tools, the Internet, PCs, and Windows. In addition, LTLS offers eight core courses and an equal number of more specialized and comprehensive courses about the shared automation system.

LTLS also offers courses aimed at special circumstances in the libraries. Examples of these course topics are: processing interlibrary loan requests for non-automated libraries, medical reference on the Internet, and children's literature.

Along with the variety of skill levels in people, there is also the challenge presented by the wide variety of equipment used by different libraries. While a relatively well funded library may be fortunate enough to have the latest in technology, a small library may be operating on donated equipment that represents older technology, presenting a challenge in accessing the shared catalog. Instruction must cover both the latest technology, as well as older connection methods.

An added complication presented by the numerous methods of access is the fact that an instructional document can become lengthy and complicated in order to address each access method. While it would be ideal to be able to individualize the instruction document for each library's specific access method, this usually is not feasible. Therefore, a comprehensive instruction document can sometimes be discouraging and confusing to libraries that must perform a substantial amount of their own automation tasks. In order to try to avoid this, a library system needs to take three basic steps. First, familiarity with each library's access method must be achieved. Then the instruction document must be comprehensive enough to address the different access methods used by all member libraries. And finally, the document should be as simple and understandable as possible. An introductory section in the document outlining each access method aids in the flow of instruction to individual libraries.

by Judy Clarence, jclarenc@csuhayward.edu

Alison Armstrong, Our New Vice-President/President Elect

Preparing for LIRT Presidency in the year 2000 is Alison Armstrong, active and involved in LIRT since 1993. Alison grew up in Manhasset on the North Shore of Long Island and later moved to Madison, WI, where she received both her B.A. (in English) and her Masters Degree in Library and Information Studies from the University of Wisconsin. She has served as Head of Library Instruction and Co-Chair of the Teaching, Learning Reference Team at the University of Nevada in Las Vegas, and is currently Head of the Training and Educational Services (TES) Department at the University of Cincinnati, where she supervises four tenure-track librarians, a K-12 outreach librarian, and two staff members. She says, "It's the responsibility of TES to help students, staff and faculty use the libraries and associated technologies. It's a great job—we're involved with students' learning, we help staff upgrade their technological skills and we work with faculty in the classroom and with their research needs." The K-12 outreach efforts at the University of Cincinnati are of particular interest. Funded by grants (i.e., soft money), the program brings teachers into UC to work in partnership with the College of Education and the Library on Information Competency.

Alison decided to point her career in the direction of library instruction because she likes working with people, individually as well as in groups. She got her start in LIRT through Steve Fitt, an active LIRT member who invited her to a meeting; she felt very much at home and found LIRT a pleasant group of people—so she joined the Organization and Bylaws Committee. Later she migrated to the Long Range Planning Committee, which she has chaired since 1998.

Her record of presentations is impressive, and covers such topics as "Continuing Students' Web Education: Creating Web Pages in the Classroom" (UC Santa Barbara, 1997), "Creating Classroom Support Material (ACRL, 1993), "Critical Thinking and Information Retrieval" (University of Nevada, 1994), "LCD Panels for Interactive Classes" (University of Nevada, 1993) "The Role of the Library in Providing User Support for Technology on Campus" (ACRL 1998). Equally impressive is her publication record: articles on "The Flexible Instruction Program: How Demographics Drive the Design", and "Crime in Academic Libraries" are examples.

I asked Alison to tell me about a memorable library instruction moment in her career, and she told me this story—indeed memorable! As a brand-new librarian at the University of Nevada, she entered a classroom with an equally brand-new portable laptop to give a demo. Uncertain of the technology, she plugged it in wrong and it blew up! Literally, with a loud "bang" followed by smoke seeping out the side. Alison managed to get through the class, then went to her supervisor feeling awful. Her supervisor asked immediately, "Are you OK?" He went on to assure her, "It's only a piece of equipment. It's the people, not the technology that count." Turned out the damage was minimal—the problem was a 5-cent fuse.

LIRT News, September 1999
Teaching Tips: Classroom Management

The Audience

Focus on the needs of the students not on the powers of the technology.

Students may have a wide range of technological skills. Allow opportunities for the advanced students to experiment, but bring them back on task to make important points.

Be patient and encouraging with students who are new to the technologies and assume no prior knowledge.

Begin your session by asking questions to gauge your audience’s technical knowledge.

If possible, have someone assist you by roving around the room and handling problems while you are presenting.

If an assistant is not possible, solicit help from your audience.

Always plan time for questions.

Some students may suffer from technology anxiety and may need extra patience and encouragement. Always explain what you are going to do, then do it slowly.

Plan your sessions carefully. A demo or a hands-on session will always take more time than a lecture.

If possible, allow time for hands-on exercises. More is learned by doing than by watching.

The Room

Make arrangements to get in the room in advance of the session. If at all possible, try to spend as much time as you can getting acquainted with the room. If the instructional room is not under your control, identify the main contact for the room, who should be able to answer questions about the room access and equipment.

Locate electrical outlets. If they are not convenient to your presentation area, locate some extension cords. It is a good idea to have your own cord and travel with it.

If using a live connection, locate the nearest network drop. If it is not convenient to your presentation area, locate some network cables. Again, having your own cables can prevent last minute crises trying to find a cable or re-arrange the furniture.

Locate the light controls. If they are not convenient to the area where you will be presenting, be prepared to ask a member of the audience to help you with the lights.

Try the lights. Do they dim? If not, find a combination of lights which allows your audience to see both you and the screens. Plan when you will have to turn them on during your presentation.

Be prepared to re-arrange the classroom furniture. The room arrangement will govern your teaching style. Make sure it is arranged to maximize your presentation. Audience members should be able to see you and your presentation from every seat in the room.

The Software

Advances in technology have proven to be both a blessing and a curse for instructional librarians. Technology helps us illustrate points that, in the past, have eluded easy oral definition. At the same time, all of us have been victims of unstable network connections, incompatible software, and other nagging problems associated with technology. Hopefully, the following tips will help to defuse problems before they can occur.

Try your presentation on the equipment you will be using. Even though some software is produced to be compatible over different platforms, try it to be sure that the software you are using is compatible with the equipment in the room.

Ask permission before installing any software onto the instructional workstation.

If you are not sure of the proper installation procedures, ask the room contact to install the software for you.

When using any type of presentation software, be sure that a compatible version of the software is installed on the workstation you will be using.

When planning "live" online sessions, have low-tech backups, such as overheads or handouts to use in case of an emergency.

Prepare and use off-line browsers to reduce the risk of network failures.

The Equipment

Know exactly what equipment will be available to you in the room. Knowing this will help you decide what equipment you need to bring yourself, or allow time to plan your presentation accordingly.

Try out your entire presentation in advance using all the required equipment. This is the best way to spot possible problems.

Take time to acquaint yourself with equipment with which you may be unfamiliar. This is especially important if you are a PC user and the instructional workstation is a Mac, or vice versa.

Identify the contact person in case of a breakdown during your session. Contact them in advance, tell them when you will be there, the equipment you will be using, and verify that their availability should you need them.

Get a list of necessary passwords and authorization codes for the machines you will be using. If possible, identify alternate means of access for your presentation.

Check all connections and power sources.

Learn the proper way to restart the machines. Simply turning them off and on may damage the equipment.

Learn to operate the light panels and projectors. Many are configured for a particular type of platform. If you need an adapter, locate them and try them out in advance.

If using an overhead projector, learn how to change the light bulb. Many projectors have an emergency backup bulb. Locate this and know how to use it.

If using a digital projector that is also used as a video projector, learn how to switch from video to computer and back.

Learn how to adjust the volume and focus on digital projectors.

Always prepare for the unexpected!
CHECK THESE OUT!
Mary Pagliaro Popp, popp@indiana.edu

The end of summer and the start of fall can bring new energy. Think about energizing yourself with new information!

TECHNOLOGY, THE WEB, AND INSTRUCTION


Portrayal of a joint project of the Denver Public Library with a high school and a middle school to develop a library laboratory and instructional program for students to supplement the collections of the school media centers. Covers the planning process and content of the program.


Report published by the National Academy of Sciences which articulates a framework of intellectual capabilities, concepts, and skills necessary for persons to develop fluency with information technology. Fluency is defined as the lifelong learning process to develop the ability to use information technology effectively today and to adapt to changes in information technology in the future. The report was developed to “set the standard for what everyone should know about it.” Well worth reading and discussing!


A practical, hands-on overview of ways for instructors to use the Web in college classes. Includes basic information about HTML, tips on scanning, images and colors, and nice introductions to advanced topics such as audio, video, streaming media and CGI scripts. Also included are philosophical discussions about distance education, research and the Web, and the virtual university.


Describes a 7 week email course offered to students, faculty and staff at Whitman College (Louisiana), including initial publicity, content of each weekly module, and feedback from participants.


McCarthy describes four sets of concepts and skills learners must have to use the Web effectively: 1) an understanding of the nature of the Web as a communication device; 2) effective information retrieval skills, including searching the Web and searching within a resource (especially full-text searching); 3) evaluation; and 4) “information responsibility,” covering copyright, plagiarism, privacy, and security.

A LITTLE THEORY TO SUPPORT PRACTICE


Presents two higher order skills from Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives in the context of information use. Analysis is the breakdown of material into its parts and the organization of those parts. It is key to evaluation. Synthesis is the creation of a new product. Callison reviews questions students might pursue and ways each skill might be approached in planning instruction.


Argues that the electronic classroom offers the student a chance to learn in a laboratory environment and cites theories of experiential learning to support this idea. The article summarizes David Kolb's experiential learning model as a cycle from concrete experiences to reflective observation, to abstract conceptualization, to active experimentation.

Gresham concludes with a list of observations about ways Kolb's theories might be applied to library instruction. An important article that should stimulate additional research.

Special Issue: The Value Aspects of Motivation in Education. Educational Psychologist 34.2 (1999).

This issue on the value/interest/appreciation aspects of motivation for learning includes 5 research articles. In particular, the article by Martin Covington, "Caring about Learning: The Nature and Nurturing of Subject-Matter Appreciation," (pp. 127-136) shares findings of interest to instructors. He notes that pursuit of extrinsic rewards (high grades, for example) are not incompatible with valuing what is being learned if students are attaining grade goals, learning material of personal interest, and task-oriented.

IDEAS YOU CAN USE TODAY


Short discussion of ways to adapt bibliographic instruction to the needs of users with disabilities, containing practical advice on ways to make teaching more multi-sensory. Includes web sites that provide more information. Not limited to the academic library. Public librarians who work with seniors will find this helpful.

continued on page 8...

Multitype Systems, continued from page 5.

The above discussion has highlighted special challenges inherent to library instruction delivered by LTLS. It is the responsibility of each library system to identify its own unique instructional challenges as part of the process of developing effective continuing education for librarians and staff in member libraries.

Meredith Smith is a consultant with the Lincoln Trail Libraries System Champaign, IL 61821 Email: msmit@LTnet.ltls.org
**Blackboard**

Blackboard's CourseInfo service enables instructors to create class web pages without knowledge of HTML or web programming languages. Default features included in CourseInfo web pages are sections for announcements, course information, staff information, external links, communication tools (including a web bulletin board, chat room, utility for creating web pages, email, and a course roster), and a suite of student tools (which enables students to check their grades, drop off files for their instructor, change their contact information, or consult a Blackboard manual). In addition, CourseInfo allows the instructor to deliver online quizzes, create reports about the number of times individual parts of the course web page were accessed, and generate a list of students who have accessed a particular page.

Instructors can upload previously existing files into their Blackboard account or enter data into forms provided by the blackboard control panel. Information entered into text boxes can be formatted, but only with HTML codes. Instructors who are unfamiliar with HTML are therefore unable to include formatting features such as bold/talicized font, line breaks, and double spaces. As a result, many instructors may find it easier to create web pages with a user-friendly HTML editor and then load these pages into CourseInfo. Likewise, the utilities provided for students to create web pages require knowledge of HTML. Instructors who lack the time or knowledge to teach such HTML tagging may want to rely on HTML editors to create web pages for class projects.

Blackboard CourseInfo is most useful for creating dynamic resources (such as online quizzes, grade books, chat rooms) which could otherwise be created only with the use of sophisticated programming languages. Chat rooms and bulletin boards allow instructors to extend discussions outside the classroom. Utilities which track grades and quiz scores also reduce the time instructors must devote to such tasks.

Blackboard employs a standard interface featuring buttons on the left side of the screen, so that users of multiple course pages always encounter a uniform navigation interface. While the common interface does make CourseInfo predictable and familiar to users, it also relies on frames. As a result, CourseInfo web pages may not display properly on smaller monitors, and users of text-based web browsers may not be able to navigate at all.

Individual users can set up trial accounts to access Blackboard CourseInfo:

http://product.blackboard.net/courseinfo/testdrive.htm

These accounts are deleted roughly once every month. Individual institutions may install Blackboard CourseInfo and make it available to their faculty and staff. The software for Blackboard CourseInfo is currently available for most popular UNIX platforms and Windows NT starting at $4,500 per server per year for unlimited courses and users (academic pricing). Individuals may also obtain their own CourseInfo sites by registering online. Individual users can create free CourseInfo sites up to 5 MB in size, provided that they access the site at least once every 30 days, do not solicit individual students to take the course, and offer the course for free. For $100, individual users can create a CourseInfo site up to 10 MB in size and enjoy unlimited usage for up to one year.

While CourseInfo does have limitations and frustrations, it can help instructors who are not proficient in HTML set up web pages, it ensures that all pages it creates contain types of tools and navigation features, and allows instructors without programming backgrounds to create interactive web pages.

Rob Withers is Electronic Information Services Librarian Miami University

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**Check These Out, continued from page 7**


Detailed description of a required course at the Saint Louis University School of Medicine to support the school's new problem-based learning curriculum. The six modules are discussed in depth, as are the final project and the final exam. Authors share evaluation results from students and plans for the future.

**Kodak's Digital Learning Center.** <http://kodak.com/US/en/digital/dlc>, provides information about using digital photos. Check out the "how to" book and the online tutorials covering such topics as creating Web graphics, digital imaging fundamentals, and digital color theory.


Wallace's regular column, Guide on the Side, includes this part series on presentation software. Part 1 reminds readers about the way audiences perceive text, spoken words, graphics and electronic information. Part 2 gives tips for screen readability.

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**IN BRIEF**


Dear Tech Talk—

I use Internet search engines from time to time, but now I need to provide instruction on the use of these search engines. I need to catch up quickly with what's new regarding Internet search engines.

—Seeking Search Engine Self-confidence

Dear SSS—

There are a number of avenues that will help you get up to speed and stay current with Internet search engines.

Get Up to Speed —

If you've been using Internet search engines, then you most likely have some favorite search engines and are familiar with many others: Alta Vista (www.altavista.com); HotBot (www.hotbot.com); Excite (www.excite.com); InfoSeek (www.infoseek.com); Lycos (www.lycos.com); WebCrawler (www.webcrawler.com); and Yahoo (www.yahoo.com). Some newer ones that you should examine are: Google (www.google.com); Northern Light (www.northernlight.com); and Snap (www.snap.com).

You should also be aware of the major metasearch engines (those that search multiple search engines simultaneously) such as: All-In-One (www.allonesearch.com); Ask Jeeves (www.askjeeves.com); Dogpile (www.dogpile.com); Mamma (www.mamma.com); MetaCrawler (www.metacrawler.com); and Savvy Search (www.savvysearch.com).

Instead of spending hours trying to identify specific search features associated with the multitude of search engines, make use of the many search engine comparison charts that have been developed. A brief selection is listed below:


How to Choose the Search Tools You Need
<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/ToolsTables.htm>

InfoPeople: Search Engines Quick Guide
<http://www.infopeople.org/src/guide.html>

InfoPeople: Search Tools Chart
<http://www.infopeople.org/src/chart.html>

Search Engine Show Down: Comparing Internet Subject Directories
<http://www.notess.com/search/dir/>

Search Engine Show Down: Search Engine Features
<http://www.notess.com/search/features/>

Search Engine Watch: Search Engine Features for Searchers
<http://www.searchenginewatch.com/facts.ataglance.html>

Examine Internet search engine tutorials such as the one created by the UC Berkeley libraries, <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/FindInfo.html> or those listed at Search Engine Watch, <http://www.searchenginewatch.com/resources/tutorials.html>. Also examine Internet search strategy sites such as, "Choose the Best Engine for Your Purpose," <http://www.nueva.pvt.k12.ca.us/~debbie/library/research/adviceengine.html>.

Finally, the May/June 1999 issue of Online magazine focuses solely on Internet search engine issues,

Search Engine Tips and Tricks

There are additional tips and tricks that go beyond the search features listed in the search engine comparison charts:

If you suspect that needed information is likely to be found at a particular organization's web site, use that site's search engine.

Some search engines (InfoSeek and Lycos) provide the capability to narrow the search from within the most recent search results.

When you find a broken link within search results, delete parts of the URL that come after the "/". The needed file may have been renamed or moved and this technique sometimes helps to locate the file.


To identify why a particular web page was retrieved in a search, use the browser's "Find" and "Find Again" commands to look for the specific search terms in the displayed page.

If a page is particularly useful, view the source code (the HTML code), and look for the <Meta> tags. If these tags are in the code, see what keywords are used to identify the content of the document in order to generate ideas for additional search terms.

Some experts recommend (see Sullivan) that the best search results are obtained without the use of Boolean operators. They maintain that the natural way the search engine works, combined with relevancy ranking, will display the most useful information at the beginning of the search results and that the use of Boolean operators actually produces less useful results.

Use "Field" searches whenever possible. The charts listed above will identify which search engines have field searching capabilities. Field searches are particularly useful when you want to identify web resources that contain the search terms in the title of the web page, when you want to narrow search results to a particular domain or server, or when you want to find web sites that contain specific images.
Search Engine Caveats

Lawrence and Giles have done research that shows that search engines continue to index less and less of what is actually available on the World Wide Web. Their research indicates that search engines are focusing on the most popular sites and commercial sites. Search engine managers don't dispute this research, arguing that they don't want to expend the resources needed to index everything on the web; they want to focus on those items of higher quality; they want to focus on improving the relevancy ranking algorithms; and they want to focus on those resources that are of the most interest to the most people.

Additionally, there are some web pages that cannot be identified or are difficult to identify by the automated spiders:

- Pages using frames — Alta Vista and Northern Light spiders can identify these pages.
- Pages created dynamically — More and more web pages are created on the “fly” from information that is stored in databases. A dynamically created web page can be easily identified because of the “?” in the URL, and the spiders ignore those URL’s.
- Pages created using XML.

Keeping Up

Finally, there are several resources available to help keep up with the changes in Internet search engines:


Search Engine Watch <http://www.searchenginewatch.com> — The definitive Internet site for search engine information. Search Engine Watch is a free service, but subscribers ($49/year) to the site receive additional subscriber-only information, including the bi-monthly “Search Engine Update Newsletter”.

SearchEngineTalk com <http://www.searchenginetalk.com> — One of several discussion forums created for webmasters and web marketers to discuss search engines, Internet directories, technology, secrets, tips, tricks, etc. Discussion forums are available for each of the major search engines.

For more information:


As always, send questions and comments to:

Snail Mail: Tech Talk
Billie Peterson
Moody Memorial Library
P. O. Box 97143
Waco, TX 76798-7143

E-Mail: Billie_Peterson@baylor.edu

Electronic Classroom continued from page 3...

- Haiwang Yuan, Gay Perkins, Elaine Moore and Elisabeth Knight, Western Kentucky University. "Techniques to Expand the Impact of Our Electronic Workshops."

For more information about the annual program, visit the following URL at the LIRT Web site: http://diogenes.baylor.edu/Library/LIRT/program.html. The site includes slides and diagrams from Mike Miller’s presentation, and bibliographies prepared by the LIRT Computer Applications Committee and the Continuing Education Committee.

Member A-LIRT continued from page 5...

Alison lives with her 14-year-old daughter Drew, and loves reading “trashy” mystery novels in her spare time. She has a real sweet tooth, but keeps slim by jogging regularly.

So we know that sweets are the way to Alison’s heart! We wish her all the best as she ascends to the LIRT Presidency, and forward to many years of her valuable contributions to LIRT as a profession.

Judy Clarence is Music Librarian, and Instructional and Interpretive Services Librarian at California State University Hayward.

LIRT News, September
Annual Report continued from page 1...

Providing for the election of an ALA Councilor required a change in the LIRT Constitution and Bylaws. The proposed term extension to three three for Vice Treasurer/Treasurer-Elect, making the Immediate Past Treasurer Chair of the Five-Year Financial Planning Subcommittee of the Long-Range Planning Committee, also required a Bylaws change. Both of these changes were voted on and approved by membership this year.

In June the Executive Board voted to accept the Long-Range Planning Committee’s recommendation of a Strategic Plan which has three goals:

- By 2001 LIRT will be recognized throughout ALA as a positive, contemporary champion of instruction for all types of libraries.
- By 2001 LIRT will increase its membership of school, public, and special librarians by 100 members.
- In 2001 LIRT will continue to be the place in ALA that will provide librarians from all types of libraries with practical, concrete solutions to instruction issues through its programs, publications, and web site.

All LIRT committees have been busy during 1998-99. Some have been taking care of on-going responsibilities such as coordinating “Bites with LIRT” and writing “LIRT’s Top Twenty” bibliography of articles on instruction, published in the June issue of LIRT News. Others have been working on projects: the Research Committee completed four “Teaching Tips” pamphlets that were available for the first time this summer at the LIRT Booth. These pamphlets provide tips on Classroom Materials, Classroom Management, Presentation Skills, and Technology in the Classroom. The information in these pamphlets will be published in LIRT News and on the LIRT web site.

LIRT News and the LIRT web site continue to be recognized as outstanding resources, providing valuable information to instruction librarians around the world in all types of libraries. The LIRT program, an annual source of practical information for instruction librarians, this year focused on electronic classrooms. “Technology in Action: Getting the Most from Your Electronic Classroom” was presented to a full house and was followed by poster sessions on creating and teaching in electronic classrooms.

LIRT has had two very effective advocates within ALA this year. Lorelle Swader is our ALA Liaison; Pat Smith is our Representative to ALA Executive Board. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them as well as all the LIRT officers, committee chairs, and members who have made LIRT run so smoothly and accomplish so much during my year as President.

LIRT has had a busy and productive year. As we look ahead, we see several challenging opportunities. These include planning for our 25th Anniversary celebration in 2002, establishing better continuity in LIRT both by looking back at our history and developing consistent practices for the future through our Manual, and increasing our overall membership with recruitment emphasis on instruction librarians in public, school, and special libraries.

Gale Burrow is Coordinator of Library Services at the Honnold/ Mudd Library, The Claremont Colleges, CA.

Teaching Tips Bibliography, continued from page 6...


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LIBRARY INSTRUCTION ROUND TABLE
COMMITTEE VOLUNTEER FORM

If you are interested in serving on a LIRT Committee, please complete this form and mail it to the Vice-President/President Elect of LIRT:
Alison Armstrong, University Libraries,
Univ. of Cincinnati, Cincinnati, OH 45221-0022
(513) 556-1761 Email: alison.armstrong@uc.edu

Name and Title:

Telephone (Work): (Home):  
FAX:  
E-Mail:  

Institutional Address:

Home Address:

Date of Application:

LIRT Committee Preferences: (Use the numbers 1-9 to indicate order of preference, with 1 being the most preferred. If you are willing to serve as recorder for this group, follow your number preference with the letter “R”)

- Computer Applications
- Conference Programs
- Continuing Education
- Elections/Nominations
- Liaison
- Long-Range Planning
- NewsLetter
- Organizational/Bylaws
- PR/Membership
- Publications
- Research

Can you regularly attend LIRT meetings at the ALA midwinter and annual conferences? YES NO

Please attach a separate sheet listing committees or offices (if any) previously held in LIRT, ALA or state/regional associations, with years of service.
COMPUTER APPLICATIONS: Examines how computers are used in library instruction. Promotes the use of computers by publishing a bibliography on computer applications for BI and maintaining a clearinghouse for information on computer software.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM: Plans the LIRT program for the ALA Annual Conference. Makes arrangements for speakers, room, handouts, and activities during the program.

CONTINUING EDUCATION: Conducts research and develops plans, actual materials, and directories to further the education and help meet the information needs of librarians engaged in user education.

ELECTION/NOuinATING: Prepares a slate of candidates for LIRT offices and maintains records on procedures, candidates, and election results. Solicits volunteers for LIRT committees and maintains files of prospective committee appointees.

liaison: Attends and reports to LIRT Steering Committee and members about committees within ALA involved in library instruction activities. Distributes to conference attendees a listing of instruction-related programs and meetings at ALA Conferences.

LONG RANGE PLANNING: Develops short and long range plans for LIRT. Implements planning and operations for the activities of LIRT. Chaired by the president-elect.

organization & bylaws: Reviews, revises, and updates the organization manual of LIRT. Recommends to the Executive Board, and through it to LIRT members, the establishment, functions, and discontinuance of committees and task forces. Maintains the Constitution and Bylaws of LIRT and recommends amendments to those documents.

NEWSLETTER: Solicits articles, prepares and distributes the LIRT newsletter. The Executive Board of LIRT serves as the Editorial Board for the LIRT newsletter.

PUBLIC RELATIONS/MEMBERSHIP: Publicizes LIRT purposes, activities, and promotes membership in LIRT. Develops brochures and news releases to inform members, prospective members, and the library profession about LIRT activities. Sponsors an exhibit booth at the Annual Conference. Organizes BITEs (meals for instruction librarians to meet for food and discussion) at the Midwinter and Annual conferences.

Publications: Establishes, maintains, and disseminates LIRT Publication Guidelines. Solicits ideas for publications and advises as to the appropriate means for publication. The LIRT newsletter editor and assistant editor are ex-officio members.

RESEARCH: Identifies, reviews, and disseminates information about in-depth, state-of-the-art research concerning library instruction for all types of libraries. Pinpoints areas where further investigation about library instruction is needed with a view toward the development of research proposals.

Committee Appointments are for 2 years. Appointments begin at the close of the annual conference and continue through the close of the annual conference in two years. For more information, contact Alison Armstrong, telephone: (513) 556-1761, email: alison.armstrong@uc.edu, or see the address on the Committee Volunteer Form on page 11.