

From the Chair, JoAnn DeVries

2001 was a great year for STS and we celebrated 40 years in grand style! Thank you, Julie Hurd, STS Chair, and Julia Gelfand, and the 2001 Conference Program Planning Committee for a wonderful time.

The ACRL Board of Directors passed the following resolution at its June meeting, "Be it resolved that the Association of College and Research Libraries Board congratulates the Science and Technology Section on its fortieth anniversary and expresses gratitude for their extraordinary leadership."

We can be proud of our leadership in a large and vital committee and discussion group structure, informative programs and research publications, and our publications *STS Signal*, *Issues in Science & Technology Librarianship*, and the STS-L listserv.

Looking forward to the next 40 years and to ALA Midwinter, nearly 100 STS member volunteers will be active in the section's business. You will see from the schedule that almost all STS meetings are open, so if you would like to be more involved, please come to a meeting and be sure to participate in the discussion groups.

JoAnn DeVries
University of Minnesota Libraries
Phone: 612-624-7446
Fax: 612-624-9245
j-devr@tc.umn.edu

College Science Librarians Discussion Group

The topic of this year's discussion group was "Creating an Effective Web Presence for College Science Libraries, Collections, and Services." Attendance at this meeting was the largest in recent memory.

Nestor Osorio, Science and Engineering Librarian at Northern Illinois University, was the invited facilitator. To lay the basis for the discussion, Nestor talked about the findings of the research study that he had conducted on 45 science and engineering branch library web sites. The study focused on identifying and describing the most frequently occurring web page links and design and con-

tent features; it did not evaluate the web sites surveyed for the purposes of rating them. Statistical information was gathered and analyzed for 66 design and hyperlink web page elements. In his analysis of the data, Nestor found that science and engineering libraries are using web pages primarily for providing information about the library and its collections, links to key databases, full-text documents, and the OPAC, and access to Internet resources. He noted some of the most frequently occurring home page design elements (hyperlinks, fonts, navigation bar, library photograph or logo); general links on the home page (hours, OPAC, about the library, electronic databases); specialized links (full-text journals, patents and trademarks); and links to other campus web sites (main library, campus home page). In discussing the rich pool of data that came out in the study, he reported that home pages contained on average 34.08 links, 2.82 colors, and 2.13 screen lengths. In addition, he mentioned that language used to identify some web page elements, such as full-text electronic journals, differed widely. For example, there were 49 different terms used in the 45 web sites for e-journal links! Nestor also provided a prototype web page, which depicted those elements that appeared on 30% or more of the web

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pages surveyed. He suggested that "prototyping," a method that is currently underutilized in creating web sites, could be very useful as a visualization and development tool.

Initial discussion centered on the study's findings and the creation and use of web pages as communication and marketing devices and as tools for accessing vital electronic resources. There was some discussion of who designs, builds and maintains web pages for the sciences in various campus settings, with some comparisons made between college and university science libraries. In particular, it was mentioned that it was difficult for many science libraries to obtain the kinds of resources that are needed to create and maintain highly sophisticated web sites. However, it was emphasized by several participants that for the most part, users are very satisfied with functional, easy-to-use web sites that do not have a lot of "bells and whistles." The latter are sites not requiring the latest web site development software or highly specialized personnel who are nearly always in short supply.

Following the discussion, several attendees went to lunch together at a restaurant near the convention center.

Information supplied by Rocco M. Piccinino

Comparison of Science and Technology Libraries Committee

The Comparison of Science and Technology Libraries Committee discussed the status of the first mini-survey on personnel issues, completed September 18. The data from the 5th survey has been combined and an article was discussed for publication in September 2001. The committee will continue using electronic mini-surveys as an alternative to the prior, exhaustive written instruments. The next survey topic is being reviewed and will involve electronic databases. As with the personnel survey, the committee agreed to extend the survey to land grant institutions and large state universities as well as the ARL institutions. The next survey will solicit collaboration with the Science-Technology Division of the Special Libraries Association and the American Society for Engineering Education.

Information supplied by Mitchell Brown

Continuing Education Committee

The main focus of the committee's session involved planning for the upcoming Continuing Education survey. Changes in the wording of the previous questionnaire were discussed. Suggestions made by the members will be incorporated into the 2001 version. The questionnaire will be advertised via the STS-L listserv and possibly by a postcard mailing or in the *STS Signal* if the time frame is right. As with the previous version, this questionnaire will be distributed via the Web to assure a good response rate. The committee will revise it, send it out to members and compile the results in time to disseminate them at Midwinter in New Orleans. Chris Desai agreed to be responsible for coordinating this project.

Jeanne Davidson is the incoming chair for the committee. We thank Jeanne for her great work on setting up the STS Continuing Education web page and arranging a permanent home for it on the ACRL server: <www.ala.org/acrl/sts/committees.html#Education>. Jennifer Edelman will be the person responsible for coordinating the Collegial Council list. People who are on the list will be contacted and it will be updated on a regular basis.

Ed Kownslar agreed to take over the coordination of the web page "Professional Continuing Education on the Web" <www.ala.org/acrl/sts/conted/stsweb.htm>. He will make sure existing links work and seek out additional sites.

Other discussion centered around the liaison connections made by the outgoing committee chairs, Nancy Hayes and Pat Viele, to two other STS Committees. Nancy, who had served as an informal liaison between Continuing Education and the Membership and Recruitment Committee, urged members to continue that connection. Pat has been meeting with the Heads of Discussion Groups to help identify "hot topics" for discussions and provide input received from survey information. She also suggested that a liaison with that group continue.

Information supplied by Pat Viele, out-going co-chair

Forum for Science and Technology Library Research

The Forum for Science and Technology Library Research showcased three excellent presentations of peer-reviewed research on issues of great interest to science and technology librarians. Dr. Gloriana St. Clair, University Librarian, Carnegie Mellon University, and Managing Editor of the journal, *Portal: Libraries and the Academy* provided expert commentary and feedback for the presenters.

Kate Manuel, California State University Hayward shared the results of a bibliometric study examining the recent publication activities of 820 e-print authors, "The Place of E-Prints in the Publication Patterns of Physical Scientists." Cecelia Brown, University of Oklahoma, described her work with a microbiology professor to integrate information literacy into an upper division science course and her use of ACRL's *Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education* to design surveys and checklists to assess students' information seeking, evaluating, and usage abilities. Her presentation and poster were given the title "Integrating Information Literacy into the Science Curriculum." Janice K. Christopher, Colorado School of Mines, on behalf of the ACRL/STS Subject and Bibliographic Access to Science Materials Committee, gave the final presentation, "Perceived Successes and Failures of Sci/Tech E-Journal Access: A Comparative Study." The questionnaire-based study focused on reference librarians' personal perceptions of the effectiveness of four existing methods of access to science and technology e-journals.

Dr. St. Clair's thoughtful advice and suggestions, as well as comments and questions from the audience, supported the Forum's goal of encouraging sci/tech librarians to develop excellent research skills and turn their research into high quality publications, posters, and presentations.

Information supplied by Kathryn Kjaer

General Discussion Group

The General Discussion Group sponsored the panel discussion "Digitizing Science." Panelists included John Saylor, Director of the Engineering and Computer Science Library at Cornell University, who was co-principal investigator of Cornell University's prototype project, sponsored by the NSF, to build a National Science Digital Library <www.siteforscience.org>, Krist Bender, the Chief Technology Officer of the National Council for Science and the Environment <<http://NCSEonline.org>>, and Priscilla Caplan, the Assistant Director for Digital Library Services at the Florida Center for Library Automation in Gainesville, who represented the "Linking Florida's Natural Heritage" project <<http://susdl.fcla.edu/lfnh/>>.

More than 60 people attended the session, which featured explanations and demonstrations of the projects, followed by discussion of issues such as the funding and staffing involved in digitizing science collections.

Information supplied by Bryna Coonin

Heads of Science and Technology Discussion Group

The Heads of Science and Technology Discussion Group met June 17, 2001 to hear Frederick W. Stoss of the Science and Engineering Library, State University at Buffalo-SUNY speak about "Bioinformatics: the new Biology." He began by defining bioinformatics as the field of science in which biology, computer science and information technology merge into a single discipline which is expected to bring new insights to biology.

Libraries have traditionally been organizers and providers of information. These activities have not diminished as researchers in medicine and biology have grown beyond using literature databases and developed databases such as GenBank. Data in molecular biology are being used by players in diverse fields and there are varying levels of familiarity with the resources. The biochemistry, physiology and biology departments at SUNY-Buffalo are working with their colleagues in the sociology, political science, ethics and legal departments on basic and applied science matters. Stoss pointed out the university staff newspaper and the alumni newsmagazine had run articles on bioinformatics, and that several research centers at SUNY have interdisciplinary programs in bioinformatics. The Interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Molecular and Cellular Biology is the umbrella under which much coordination takes place. Research on campus and in the business world is being driven by funding from pharmaceutical companies. Applied Biosystems and Celera Genomics are aggressively doing research in bioinformatics.

He urged us to work closely with faculty and researchers in the bioinformatics field, as well as to encourage undergraduate science students to enter library and information science MLS/MILS programs. To further our own education, he mentioned programs at the University of Washington and the University of Pittsburgh offering courses in the biomedical and health information and spoke highly of a MLA Continuing Education course that the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) offers on Molecular Biology Information Resources. He suggested that this would be suitable as a future

preconference topic. To stay abreast of events, he recommended subscribing to *The Scientist* <www.the-scientist.com>, which provides life scientists with relevant information to assist them in making decisions in their work. This e-journal was founded and is edited by Eugene Garfield who was among those present at the meeting. Garfield spoke about the importance of information architecture in the sciences and reminded us that a subscription to *The Scientist* is free and that the entire staff of a library may subscribe.

Our new meeting time of Sunday at 4:30 p.m. brought us a record turnout of 39 people!

Information supplied by Laura Lane, Judith Johnson and Don Frank

Membership and Recruitment Committee

The STS New Members' Reception was held on Saturday morning, June 16th. It was a huge success! With approximately 50 people in attendance, attendees were spilling out into the hallway. Although several attendees were already members, they showed renewed interest in becoming active within the section. The committee discussed membership trends throughout ACRL. Questionnaires sent to former STS members provided reasons for the decrease in section membership: ALA's new limits on the number of sections allowed; shifts in job responsibilities; and changes in personal interests. To counter the falling membership, the committee created a recruitment letter that encourages librarians to promote sci/tech librarianship to their student employees. The ACRL Initiative Grant is funding the mailing, which will include ACRL's recruitment brochure as well. New topics introduced for discussion included an investigation into liaison opportunities with NMRT, and the creation of new labels for STS brochures to correctly represent the Section's new leadership.

Information supplied by Mary Jo Handke

Oberly Award Committee

The committee met in an open session on Saturday, July 16, 2001, with six of eight members and one guest in attendance. Final arrangements were made for presentation of the 2001 Oberly Award to Dr. Charles H. Smith, author of *Biodiversity Studies: A Bibliographic Review*. The committee agreed to treat Dr. Smith to lunch following the STS Program on Monday. The next Oberly Award will be presented in 2003 for nominated works published in 2001 or 2002.

Information supplied by Jeannie Miller

Organization and Planning Committee

The committee looked over the current draft of the strategic plan. Suggestions received at Council I were discussed and a subgroup of committee members were identified to work on the next draft, including new wording. The committee asked to receive any additional suggestions, so that a new draft can be created.

Information supplied by Amy Shannon

Publications Committee

Detailed statistics on usage of the STS website were distributed to committee members. It was pointed out that items with high use are all directly accessible from the main page. After some discussion about the difficulties of keeping it current, it was decided to drop the list of sci/tech libraries, which has become incomplete and outdated. Two other STS committees have moved their pages to the STS website, and another has expressed interest.

STS-L now has 1,034 registered users. Gayle Baker and Teresa Berry will be stepping down as moderators and will be replaced by incoming committee members Jacqueline Kracker and Margaret Mellinger. The new STS Council listserv has also been a success.

ISTL now has 2,724 subscribers, and the website had over 172,000 hits in the first six months of the year. Jean Poland and Michael Fosmire were selected as new members of the ISTL editorial board from among an impressive pool of applicants.

An audio streaming demonstration project sponsored by the committee has received favorable reviews and members present expressed considerable interest in a proposition that we post materials from future STS programs in this manner.

Philip Herold will continue in his role as co-editor of the *Signal* and will join Heather Moberly as co-chair of the committee, replacing Edward Lener.

Information supplied by Edward Lener

Subject and Bibliographic Access Committee

The STS Subject and Bibliographic Access Committee met at ALA Annual in San Francisco on Saturday, June 16th. Members discussed our research project, "The Perceived Successes and Failures of Sci/Tech E-Journal Access: A Comparative Study," which was to be presented as a part of the STS Research Forum the following day. Findings that the committee thought should be highlighted by Janice Christopher when she presented the study at the Research Forum were identified. The committee agreed to submit a paper based on the research project by the end of the summer, for possible publication.

Three possible future initiatives were discussed:

- 1) A follow-up survey to assess changing access to e-journals, and the perceived successes and failures of those methods of access;
- 2) An investigation of the degree to which free e-journals and newsletters are indexed, and where they are indexed;
- 3) Sponsoring a discussion forum on collaborations between faculty members and cataloging staff to provide access to science and technology materials.

Information supplied by Steven Riel

Conference Program Planning

Since the meeting in Washington, the upcoming program has been given a name: "Old, New, Borrowed, and Blue: Science and Technology Intellectual Property Issues in the Digital Age."

Richard Llewellyn and JoAnn DeVries reported on their meeting with the ACRL Conference Program Planning Committee chairs. They were given additional information about when the budget would be available from ACRL.

The committee then discussed potential speakers for the program. The ACRL allotment would allow for one paid, non-librarian speaker. The other speakers would have to be librarians who are not eligible for ACRL funding. Several speakers who fit both groups of criteria were discussed. Three to four speakers will be chosen for the program. At least one should be a scientist with experience in information/intellectual property issues as a part of his or her daily experience. The non-librarian speakers need to have involvement in these issues from the library point of view. The idea of a Federal employee with patent experience was discussed.

The group then discussed additional plans for associated activities with the program. The reception will be held in conjunction with a poster session on intellectual property issues following the program. The STS Research Committee has agreed to judge the poster proposals for the program.

The committee is still looking at options for a field trip at the end of the conference. The Center for Diseases Control (CDC) is not available for such purposes, but the Carlos Museum at Emory University and the Atlanta Botanical Garden are being investigated as possible venues.

Information supplied by Richard Llewellyn

***STS Committee & Discussion Group Chairs * STS Committee & Discussion Group Chairs ***

**College Science Librarians
Discussion Group**
Rocco Piccinino, Co-Chair /02
rpiccini@email.smith.edu

Terri Freedman, Co-Chair /03
tfreedma@brynmawr.edu

**Comparison of Science and
Technology Libraries Committee**
Mitchell Brown, Chair /02
mbrown@princeton.edu

Continuing Education Committee
Jeanne R. Davison, Chair /03
jeanne.davidson@orst.edu

Forum for Sci/Tech Library Research
Kathryn Kjaer, Chair /03
kkjaer@uci.edu

General Discussion Group
Bryna Coonin, Co-Chair /02
cooninb@mail.ecu.edu

Estella M. Terrazas, Co-Chair /03
sterrazas@earthlink.net

Government Information Committee
Jennifer Laherty, Co-Chair /02
jlaherty@csuhayward.edu

Julie Williamsen, Co-Chair /03
julie_williamsen@byu.edu

**Heads of Sci/Tech Libraries
Discussion Group**
Donald G. Frank, Co-Chair /02
frankd@pdx.edu

Laura Lane, Co-Chair /02
lane@temple.edu

Judith R. Johnson, Co-Chair /02
Judjoh@cc.usu.edu

**Membership & Recruitment
Committee**
Lori J. Critz, Co-Chair /02
critzl@u.library.arizona.edu

Nancy L. Hayes, Co-Chair /03
nlhayes@uakron.edu

Nominating Committee
Patricia A. Kreitz, Chair /02
pkreitz@slac.stanford.edu

Oberly Award Committee
Kathy Fescemyer, Chair /03
kaf12@psu.edu

Organization & Planning Committee
Alison Ricker /03
alison.ricker@oberlin.edu

Amy Shannon, Co-Chair /03
ashannon@unr.edu

Publications Committee
Philip Herold, Co-Chair /03
philip.herold@so.mnscu.edu

Heather K. Moberly, Co-Chair /03
moberlh@okstate.edu

**Publisher/Vendor Relations
Discussion Group**
Thomas Auger, Co-Chair /03
tom.auger@library.gatech.edu

Catherine Soehner, Co-Chair /01
soehner@cats.ucsc.edu

**Science and Technology Database
Discussion Group**
Donna Gagnier, Co-Chair /02
infoscout@excite.com

Ann J.(Angi) Faiks, Co-Chair /03
faiks001@umn.edu

**Subject & Bibliographic Access
Committee**
Ibironke Lawal, Co-Chair /03
iolawal@vcu.edu

Steven Reil, Co-Chair /03
sriel@oeb.harvard.edu

2002 Conference Program Planning
Richard Llewellyn, Chair /02
rllewellyn@gwgate.lib.iastate.edu

STS Continuing Education Survey

Do you want ALA meetings and programs to *really* meet your needs? If so, please help us help you, by filling out the STS Continuing Education Questionnaire. You can find it at:

www.ala.org/acrl/sts/conted/survey.htm

This survey, by members of the Continuing Education Committee, is meant to address the current issues of importance or relevance to Sci/Tech librarians. It's addressed to the membership of STS and the results are tabulated by the Continuing Education Committee. The data are then taken to the STS Council at the following Midwinter meeting. The STS Program Planning Committee and the Heads of Discussion Groups use the results when planning programs and discussions for Annual meeting.

The Continuing Education Committee is charged with doing the survey once every two years. The two-year cycle is historical, but this cycle does present interesting possibilities for timely coverage of current continuing education needs.

The questionnaire is written for you, STS Members. The data from the survey are important in helping STS committees to plan programs and discussions that will be useful for the membership. Please submit your response today!

Please submit your completed questionnaire by November 1, 2001.

**ACRL Science and Technology Section
Committee Volunteer Form**

I am interested in serving on the following committees:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Comparison of Sci/Tech Libraries | <input type="checkbox"/> Nominating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conference Program Planning | <input type="checkbox"/> Oberly Award |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Continuing Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Organization & Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Forum for Science & Technology
Library Research | <input type="checkbox"/> Subject & Bibliographic Access
to Science Materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Government Information | <input type="checkbox"/> Publications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Membership & Recruitment | |

I am interested in chairing the following discussion groups:

- College Science Librarians
- General
- Heads of Sci/Tech Libraries
- Publisher/Vendor Relations
- Science & Technology Databases

Topics of interest for programs and discussion groups:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Email: _____

Mail to: JoAnn DeVries, University of Minnesota,
Magrath Library, 1984 Buford Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55108

STS Electronic Communications Update

STS-L Listserv

STS-L is a moderated discussion group, open to all interested persons. It is sponsored by the Science & Technology Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries.

To join STS-L, send the following message to LISTSERV@LISTSERV.UTK.EDU (do not include a period after EDU). The SUBJECT line should not be left blank; if your e-mail software does not allow leaving this line blank, try typing only a period (.) in the SUBJECT line.

SUBSCRIBE STS-L First Name Last Name

Moderators: Jacqueline Kracker and Margaret Mellinger

Issues in Science and Technology Librarianship (ISTL)

<http://www.library.ucsb.edu/istl/>
Editor: Andrea Duda

STS Web Page

<http://www.ala.org/acrl/sts/sts.html>
Webmaster: Jennifer Duvernay

STS Signal on the Web

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Editors: Elizabeth Cooksey & Philip Herold



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ACRL -- American Library Association
50 East Huron Street
Chicago, IL 60611-2795