

Library & Information Technology Association

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Annual Report of the Library and Information Technology Association 2006-2007

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LITA's Mission

The Library and Information Technology Association continues to educate, serve, and reach out to its members, other ALA members and divisions, and the entire library and information community. This three-part mission is supported by a wide variety of efforts and activities of the membership.

ALA President Leslie Burger launched a new program to develop new ALA leaders and asked divisions and other units to sponsor one or more emerging leaders. LITA stepped to the plate to sponsor one LITA member. After a review of 17 applicants, LITA selected Michelle Boule for LITA sponsorship. Two other LITA members who applied for sponsorship and thirteen other LITA members along with Michelle were accepted into the program of 100 emerging leaders. We are pleased that LITA is so well represented in a group that will be future leaders for ALA and LITA. Michelle Boule will be working with the officers on aspects of strategic plan implementation during her two year commitment to LITA service.

The Year in Review

LITA has an ongoing slate of exceptional educational opportunities. LITA offers these opportunities in the form of conference programs and discussions, preconferences and workshops, regional institutes, and the National Forum. The topics are timely and the quality is high. As part of LITA's Strategic Plan, the Board created an Education Working Group to review our current educational offerings and examine new delivery mechanisms. The group was made up of the chairs of the Education, Regional Institute and Program Planning Committees. Their recommendation to merge the Regional Institutes Committee into the Education Committee is currently being implemented. The new Education Committee will focus on a wide range of education programs through a variety of delivery modes. As a pilot project, one existing Regional Institute, 'Establishing an Institutional Repository' presented by Susan Gibbons, is currently being re-designed for online delivery.

Since June 2006, two Regional Institutes were offered twice on the following topics: *User Centered Design: Design Process & Usability*, and *Institutional Repositories*. These regional educational opportunities continue to be in demand and constitute an important component of LITA's educational offerings.

The 2006 National Forum, Netville in Nashville: Web Services as Library Services, was held in Nashville, Tennessee, October 26-29, 2006. This very well-attended three-day educational event included preconferences, general sessions, more than 30 concurrent sessions, and 11 post sessions. We offered two excellent preconferences: *Open Source Software Installfest* and *Developing Best Project Management Practices for IT Projects*. We presented three engaging keynote sessions: *Save America's Treasures: Preservation of Rare Acetate and Vinyl Recording Transcriptions* by Alan Stoker, Recorded Sound and Moving Image Curator, Country Music Hall of Fame; *Libraries and Public Interest Entertainment* by Thom Gillespie, creator and director of the MIME program in interactive storytelling and computer game design in the department of Telecommunications at Indiana University; and *Web 2.0 and the Library 2.0 in Our Future* by Stephen Abram, VP Innovation, SirsiDynix. There were over thirty programs in five concurrent sessions. Some of the topics discussed were new the future of the catalog, faceted searching and topic maps, Web 2.0 applications for library services, open source applications, library digitization projects, SUSHI, RFID, online library instruction, and digital publishing, archiving, and management systems.

The LITA 2006 National Forum will occur in Denver, Colorado, October 4-7, 2007, Denver Marriott City Center. The 10th LITA National Forum's theme is Technology with Altitude. Keynote speakers will be Jeffrey Kiehl, National Center for Atmospheric Research, Colorado; David King, Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, Kansas; and Jeremy Frumkin, Gray Chair for Innovative Library Services, Oregon. Two pre-conference workshops will be offered: *the-library-knowledge-kills*, a live action experiment in alternative reality game design with Thom Gillespie, Indiana University, and *Library-wide IT Proficiency* conducted by Grace Sines of National Agricultural Library, MD and Brenda Chawner of Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. Thirty-six concurrent sessions will be offered along with the vendors showcase and poster sessions.

LITA sponsored one pre-conference workshop at Midwinter in Seattle: *Podcast U: Libraries, Podcasting, and the New Culture of Personal Broadcasting on Campus*. LITA is planning its usual extensive array of educational opportunities at the ALA 2007 Annual Conference. LITA is co-sponsoring one pre-conference with ALCTS: *Workflow Analysis, Redesign, and Implementation: Integrating the Complexities of Electronic Resources in the Digital Age*. Sunday Afternoon with LITA will include the Top Technology Trends, the LITA Awards presentations and reception, and the President's Program, *Tag! Your IT!: Online Digital Audio Collections Meet PennTags*.

LITA hosted the Town Meeting at the 2007 Midwinter Meeting. This interactive session is a vehicle for LITA to receive feedback from the membership in attendance. The LITA Blog offers members who cannot attend the Town Meeting the opportunity to provide input as well. Vice President Mark Beatty facilitated the discussion with the assistance of Michelle Boule, LITA's Emerging Leader focusing on what would bring value to LITA members.

As one outcome of the 2006 Town Meeting at the Midwinter conference, a Public Library Interest Group was formed last year and met for the first time at Midwinter in Seattle. LITA's responsiveness to an ever-changing technological environment is reflected in the following Interest Groups (IG) which are regularly reviewed for renewal:

- ◆ The Technical Services Workstation IG was disbanded
- ◆ Open Source Systems IG was renewed

- ◆ Library Consortia & Systems IG was re-formed
- ◆ Next Gen Catalog IG was formed

LITA's online presence is continually being enhanced. LITA's blog allows LITA members to record summaries of conference meetings and post comments on topics of interest. The new LITA wiki has been launched. The Tool Kit for the Expert Web Searcher has been moved from a Web page to the wiki. LITA's new Standards Coordinator has created a wiki entitled "Standards Watch: Keeping an Eye on Standards of Interest to LITA Members." Knowledgeable LITA members can provide information about standards. It is a great place to collect reactions to standards under review. LITA served as a pioneer division within ALA to move its Web site to the new Content Management System.

The LITA Standards Coordinator, Diane Hillman, began her work during the fall of 2006 organizing the standards monitoring process for LITA. In addition to the Standards Watch wiki, Diane lead a managed discussion at the Standards IG meeting at Midwinter and has been active on LITA-L in sharing standards information and seeking input on developing standards. LITA has always played a significant role in standards development and the formalization of this new standards coordination role ensures a leading role for LITA within ALA and the library community.

In the area of LITA publications we are pleased that Information Technology and Libraries (ITAL) is now available online to all LITA members upon publication. Non-members have access after six months. ITAL's editor, John Webb, retires in August 2007 and our Acquisitions Editor, Kathlene Hanson, steps down from her post. The Publications Committee is currently seeking individuals to recommend to the Board to serve in these two key editorial roles. Martin Kalfatovic, the new editor of Technology Electronic Review (TER), has lead the TER editorial team in moving this electronic-only publication to the LITA Wiki. Our Publications remain a high priority for LITA as they represent part of the organization's commitment to educating and reaching out.

After a dues increase in 2005, LITA's financial situation is rebounding from the anticipated and accurately predicted slump. The LITA Board is committed to bringing our members new products and services through a portion of this increase and will be examining new offerings at its upcoming meetings. We have appreciated the members who have renewed their LITA membership and welcome new members. LITA still continues to seek regular sources of additional revenue in order to meet its mission and the desires of its membership. LITA remains especially grateful for the active support of the many vendor sponsors and others. This financial backing for awards and scholarships, the Forum, and various receptions, meals and services ensures that LITA can focus on its mission of educating, serving, and reaching out.

Finally, strategic plan implementation is well underway. The Board received a recommendation from the Assessment and Research Task Force to establish a committee to coordinate assessment processes and feedback flows to enable the Board to measure how well we are succeeding at our strategic plan implementation. A number of committees have expressed interest in a member survey. Satisfaction measures with our education programs, publications, and other services are necessary to continually improve LITA's offerings. An overview of strategic plan initiatives that are currently in process or recently completed include:

To Educate:

- ♦ Education programming was examined by the Education Working Group and their recommendation to merge the Regional Institutes Committee into the Education Committee was accepted by the Board. The Education Committee will be responsible for Regional Institutes and online forms of educational programs. A pilot to transfer a current Regional Institute to an online course is underway.
- ♦ ITAL is now available electronically immediately upon publication to members. New electronic delivery modes for TER are under investigation.
- ♦ Establishment of the LITA wiki provides a virtual home for the sharing of established and evolving technological practices.
- ♦ Continued, ongoing development of high quality education programs at conferences, the National Forum, and Regional Institutes.
- ♦ The LITA Blog now provides a new delivery mode to both communicate and education LITA members particularly regarding program content. Recent enhancements include podcasts of the Top Technology Trends experts and LITA leadership. Also, podcasts for the LITA 2007 Elections were made available. The LITA wiki promises similar opportunities to share technological expertise in a networked environment.

To Serve:

- ♦ The establishment of the Standards Coordinator position allows LITA to better participate in the standards development process.
- ♦ LITA has played a lead role in the implementation of ALA's new Content Management System and had a number of LITA members on an ALA Task Force to re-design the ALA Web site.
- ♦ The recommendations of the Assessment and Research Task Force to create an Assessment Committee will soon guide the LITA Board in the establishment of assessment processes to measure our member satisfaction.
- ♦ LITA has added annual sponsorship of an ALA Emerging Leader and welcomes co-sponsorship opportunities on programs with other divisions.
- ♦ The LITA Emerging Leader will be working with LITA Leadership on strategic initiatives.
- ♦ The LITA dues increase has stabilized the association's financial situation and the Board can now examine new services and programs to better serve LITA members.

To Reach Out:

- ♦ The Membership Development Committee is actively working on recruitment and retention of non-librarian information technology professionals.
- ♦ The establishment of the new Public Library Interest Group recognizes specialized needs of public library members who represent a growing segment of the LITA membership.
- ♦ The LITA Board met with ALA ITTS staff in Seattle to create new modes of communication to partner with ALA on technology infrastructure. A similar discussion was held at the Spring Executive Committee meeting with Conference planning staff to ensure the availability of technology at conferences.
- ♦ LITA has started conversations with other organizations to determine partnership opportunities for the delivery of online education programs.

2006 was the year LITA celebrated our history, future, and our many accomplishments. The National Forum in Nashville was our final tribute to 40 excellent years and a look to the next 40 years.

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