Library & Information Technology Association

**Annual Report of the Library and Information Technology Association
2006-2007**
Mark Beatty, LITA President
June 6, 2008

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.

At the annual ALA Fall Executive meeting this year LITA Executive Committee members participated with all the various ALA divisions and ALA officers in a joint meeting. There was a guided discussion on evaluating the effectiveness of the organization, strengths and weaknesses and how to implement change for improvement. It was a good exercise and the participants honestly spoke about the elements of dissatisfaction that worried them the most, such as a lack of nimbleness. There were also a number of good ideas for future solutions. The first result is an initial report and recommendation of the Seven Measures Working Group. LITA has embraced their call for Data-Driven Strategies and has created an Assessment and Research Committee and completed a consulting exercise with Robin Wedewer of Tecker Consulting to establish a research agenda for LITA.

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, and the National Forum. The topics are timely and the quality is high.   As an ongoing part of LITA's Strategic Plan, the Board has merged the Regional Institutes Committee into the Education Committee. The new Education Committee is focusing on a wide range of education programs through a variety of delivery modes. As a beginning and establishing a data-driven strategy the committee has surveyed the membership in order to assess continuing education needs and establish a plan for effective delivery.

The 2007 National Forum, Technology with Altitude was held in Denver, Colorado, October 4-7, 2007. The conference was even better attended than usual. The two preconferences, *Library-Wide IT Proficiency* presented by Brenda Chawner and Grace Sines and *the-library-knowledge-kills* gaming session by Thom Gillespie were well attended and well received. There were 3 outstanding keynote presentations: *The Scientific and Social Challenges of Global Warming* by Jeffrey Kiehl, Senior Scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research in Colorado; *The Future is not out of Reach: Change, Library 2.0, and Emerging Trends* by David King, Digital Branch and Services Manager at Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library in Kansas; and *In Our Cages With Golden Bars* by Jeremy Frumkin, Gray Chair for Innovative Library Services at Oregon State University. All 3 keynotes were recorded as podcasts and there is extensive blog coverage of all the 30 plus forum concurrent sessions, the added poster sessions and the vendor showcase on the LITA blog. New sessions of particular note were a 5 minute madness session and 2 managed discussion programs. Placing all the Forum documentation and session handouts on a flash drive given to each registrant was met with pleasure and enthusiasm by the attendees.

The 11th Annual LITA National Forum will take place October 16-19, 2008 at the Hilton Netherland Plaza Hotel in Cincinnati, OH. The three-day educational event will include preconferences, general sessions, and more than 30 concurrent sessions, vendor showcases, poster sessions and managed discussions. The LITA National Forum has become a highly regarded annual event for those involved in new and leading edge technologies in the library and information technology field. Keynote speakers will include Michael Porter, Community Product Manager, WebJunction and R. David Lankes, director of the Information Institute of Syracuse University. Two pre-conference workshops will be offered: *Marketing the Value of the Library's IT Department* with presenters: Grace Sines and Gary McCone of the National Agricultural Library and *Innovations in Next Generation Library Management Systems* with presenters: Andrew Nagy, Villanova University; Tim Daniels, Pines Program Manager; Darrell R. Ulm, Stow-Munroe Falls Public Library

LITA sponsored one pre-conference workshop at Midwinter in Philadelphia: *User Centered Design: Design Process & Usability* by David Lindahl and Brenda Reeb. LITA is planning its usual extensive array of educational opportunities at the ALA 2007 Annual Conference, including a pre-conference on: *Library-Wide IT Proficiency Preconference* presented by Brenda Chawner and Grace Sines. Sunday Afternoon with LITA will include the Top Technology Trends panel discussion, the LITA Awards presentations and reception, and the President's Program: *Isn't it great to be in the library…wherever that is?* by Joe Janes, associate professor in the Information School of the University of Washington in Seattle and columnist for American Libraries and members of the "It's All Good" blogging group will serve as the reactor panel.

LITA hosted the Town Meeting at the 2009 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 Andrew Pace and LITA Emerging Leader Lauren Pressley facilitated the discussion on Communicating and Marketing the Strength of LITA. Check the LITA blog for reports and responses to the lively morning.

LITA's online presence is continually being enhanced. LITA's blog enables and encourages LITA members to record summaries of conference meetings and post comments on topics of interest. The results for Forum and ALA sessions is LITA members who can not attend those events to still benefit from the continuing education opportunities afforded by the sessions. The number of podcasts recorded and available on the Blog also continues to grow. All 3 Forum keynotes, ALA Annual Top Tech Trends and Presidents Programs were captured and posted. Podcast interviews of all LITA candidates for elected office have been posted to the blog providing another tool to help members know and knowledgably select their representatives. The new LITA wiki has been launched and ready for content population. The Tool Kit for the Expert Web Searcher has been moved from a Web page to the wiki. LITA's Standards Coordinator continues to actively populate the wiki entitled "Standards Watch: Keeping an Eye on Standards of Interest to LITA Members" where knowledgeable LITA members can provide information about standards. Growing from discussions at the LITA Town Meeting the BIGWIG Interest Group launched a CMS sand box system called Your BIGWIG to support the activities of the Interest Group and provide a proving ground for LITA members to try CMS tools. All these activities are designed to help LITA reach out to the members regardless of their ability to attend and contribute to live functions.

The LITA Standards Coordinator, Diane Hillman, continued her work this year 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 very active on LITA-L and the LITA Blog 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 standards coordination role ensures a leading role for LITA within ALA and

the library community.

LITA continued to sponsor another Emerging leader this year. Again one LITA member, Lauren Pressley, was selected after a review of 22 applicants. Lauren Pressley will be working with the officers on aspects of marketing and communications during her two year commitment to LITA service. Additional other LITA members who applied for sponsorship were accepted into the overall program of emerging leaders. We are pleased that LITA continues to be so well represented in a group that will be future leaders for ALA and LITA. LITA is pleased enough with the Emerging Leaders program that we will sponsor 2 leaders next year. Each of the last two years we've also kept track of the applicant cohort and used them as a nominal focus group, a target group to market LITA activities and a targeted committee volunteers pool. This approach has worked to integrate newer members in to the LITA culture and provide a people pool of new active members.

This year, in collaboration with Neal-Schuman, LITA published a new LITA Guide: Making Library Web Sites Usable by Tom Lehman and Terry Nikkel. All involved with 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 new editor is Marc Truitt 2007 and the Managing Editor is Judith Carter. Martin Kalfatovic, the new editor of *Technology Electronic Review* (*TER*), is leading the *TER* editorial team in moving towards electronic-only publication to the LITA Blog and wiki. Our Publications remain a high priority for LITA as they represent part of the organization's commitment to educating and reaching out.

As mentioned above there is a brand new committee, Assessment and Research, under the chair of Diane Bisom. Much of the credit for creating what should be an important committee to the planning of the future of LITA goes to Past President Bonnie Postlethwaite. The new committees charge is to work with other LITA groups to assess how well we are succeeding at meeting our strategic goals through the collection of assessment data and feedback. The new committee got off to a fast start at Mid-Winter 2008 by hosting a half day planning workshop for LITA leaders with the consulting firm of Techer Associates.

LITA's current financial situation is stable and healthy. The LITA Board is committed to bringing our members new products and services on our own initiative and working closely with ALA ITTS. 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 continuing particularly in trying to find the balance in workloads and responsibilities between volunteers, elected officers and staff. The Board anticipates the information received from the Assessment and Research Committee will serve to help guide the activities of the organization using assessment processes and feedback flows to enable the Board to measure how well we are succeeding at our strategic plan. A number of committees have expressed interest and initiated member surveys. Satisfaction measures with our education programs, publications, and other services are necessary to continually improve LITA's offerings.

This past year has shown that the lightness and openness of the LITA structure combined with the nimbleness of our members accounts for a great deal of the success LITA has in serving it's membership. With that success LITA strives to increase those qualities and increase it's service.

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