# LSSIRT NEWSLETTER

http://www.ala.org/lssirt/

#### **FEBRUARY 2005**

#### FROM THE PRESIDENT'S COMPUTER

Jim Hill, LSSIRT President November 29, 2004

I'm sitting up here in my study this morning, watching it snow. . .and snow. . .and snow. It seems only like the day before yesterday that we were fighting the heat and humidity of Orlando as ALA met



for their annual conference.

I want to bring you all up to date on several things that have happened since Orlando. Probably the most important thing was that I was chosen as a representative from the division representing the smaller roundtables to attend the fall planning retreat of ALA. The meetings were held in Chicago the latter part of September and the latter part of October. The primary goal of these meetings was to give ALA a direction on what issues to pursue through 2010. The September meeting was held in Skoie and most of the time was spent brainstorming and discussing issues. Some of the issues that were discussed were:

- 1) The need for improved communications with members, key stakeholders, and the public.
- 2) The need for increased advocacy efforts.
- 3) The need to capitalize on the opportunities presented by technology to enhance delivery of

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- service and create a seamless membership experience.
- 4) The need for ALA to be more involved in assisting libraries in responding to funding issues.
- 5) Membership opportunities exist to expand beyond librarians and paraprofessionals to other library support personnel, at the same time a more effective job needs to be done to reach paraprofessionals.

So folks, as you can see, we are finally acquiring a seat at the table. After much discussion on these issues we agreed to meet in Chicago the last part of October to come up with a final document. This meeting also coincided with the ALA board meeting, and they also participated in the discussion.

The last part of October we again met and came up with the following goals for ALA-2010. These were presented to the board for discussion and approval. The following are the goals:

- 1) Advocacy/Value of the Profession: ALA and its members will be the leading advocates for the value of libraries and librarians.
- 2) Education: ALA will provide leadership to ensure the highest quality of graduate and continuing education for librarians and other library workers.
- 3) Public Policy: ALA will be a key voice in national and international library and information policy formation that will impact on policies that affect libraries and information.
- 4) Building the Profession: ALA will be instrumental in recruitment, development and retaining a highly qualified and diverse library work force.
- 5) Membership: ALA members will receive outstanding value for their membership as a result of focusing on and responding to their needs
- 6) Organizational Excellence: ALA will be an inclusive, effectively governed, well managed and fiscally responsible organization. These are lofty and somewhat idealistic goals but with the support of the membership I, along with strategic planning committee and board, feel that they can be attained.

#### Hot Chowda and Cold Beans: Highlights of the Midwinter Steering Committee Meeting

Library professionals arriving in Boston for the Midwinter American Library Association meetings were greeted with fog, ice, snow, and sub-zero wind chills. Bowls of steaming hot "chowda" delivered welcome thawing while merchants hawked all manner of head coverings to guard against cold "beans."

LSSIRT: The Library Support Staff Interests Round Table held its Steering Committee meeting on Saturday, January 16, at the Sheraton Boston Hotel. Highlights included:

- 1. Efforts by ALA to recruit more support staff are yielding results. LSSIRT membership has increased to 480 members. John Chrastka (ALA Membership Marketing Manager) unveiled a peer-to-peer toolkit entitled "Sharing Connections." Recruitment into ALA of support staff by support staff will consist of direct mailing and a test-market of 5 states. The LSSIRT/ALCTS/RUSA special membership initiative will continue, while the new support staff dues category of \$35 is proving very popular. Gerald Hodges (Membership) spoke to a new initiative to combine membership in a state chapter along with ALA and LSSIRT. The state chapters will carry the load of the recruitment but it will be a "win-win" situation. The LSSIRT Steering Committee gave its approval toward ALA ratification of this initiative.
- Jordan Scepanski, ALA council representative to the small round tables, reported on a move to change the dues structure from categories to one based on annual salary. Jordan asked to hear LSSIRT members' opinions concerning this change.
- American Libraries is devoting their March cover article to support staff. This is a first! Author Jennifer S. Kutzik used extensive quotes from library workers to explore the question "Are you the Librarian?"
- 4. Lorelle Swader (HRDR) reported the certification survey elicited 3,500 responses. Overwhelmingly, 69% of respondents thought certification would benefit them. 19% felt it didn't matter, and 12% said there would be no benefit. All 50 states were represented. LSSIRT will proceed with incorporating these survey results into Strategic Planning and COPE3 implementation.
- 5. The 2005 ALA Annual Conference, in cooperation with LSSIRT and COLT, will

feature an inaugural two-day Conference Within A Conference (CWAC) entitled "Empowering Library Support Staff for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." The reduced registration fee will provide rich programming and events on June 25 and 26. Also included will be the ALA opening general session, an exhibits pass, luncheon with keynote speakers, talk tables for networking, and a closing session. The June 24<sup>th</sup> COLT banquet and the June 26<sup>th</sup> LSSIRT Evening Out will be publicized as add-on events requiring separately-purchased tickets.

ALA-Allied Professional Association: The ALA Committee on Organization moved that due to significant overlap between the activities and missions of the ALA Committee on Pay Equity and the ALA-APA Committee on Salaries and Status of Library Workers, all responsibilities from the ALA committee would be transitioned to the ALA-APA committee by 2006, and the ALA committee dissolved. Diane Fay, past-president of LSSIRT, is currently chairing the ALA-APA Committee on Salaries and Status of Library Workers. The revenue generating sources for ALA-APA will increase in the coming year with the first-ever support staff salary survey and the new Certified Public Library Administrators certification program.

ALA Ahead to 2010: ALA's new strategic plan was distributed in draft form for discussion and comment. Jim Hill, LSSIRT President, participated in focus group sessions held in Chicago in the fall of 2004. The 6 goal areas include:

- 1. Advocating for the value of the profession.
- 2. Promoting quality education for both librarians and library staff.
- Formulating national and international policies that impact library and information services.
- 4. Recruiting and developing a highly qualified, diverse library work force.
- 5. Ensuring outstanding value for ALA membership dues.
- 6. Insuring ALA is an inclusive, effectively governed, well-managed, and financially strong organization.

The ALA Executive Board will consider comments and suggestions to the plan at their spring meeting, when they will further refine the plan for consideration by ALA Council at the 2005 Annual meeting in Chicago. For more information, visit

http://www.ala.org/ala2010draftstrategicplan/

ALA-APA Standing Committee on the Salaries and Status of Library Workers: Report to Council Wednesday, January 19, 2005, Boston Report given by Diane Fay, Committee Chair

Good Morning,

First, I'd like to thank Carol Brey–Casiano for appointing me chair of the ALA-APA Standing Committee on the Salaries and Status of Library Workers.

I'd also like to take a second to recognize and thank Mitch Freedman for his efforts to bring the issue of the salaries and status of library workers to the table.

Madam President, Councilors, staff and guests, the Standing Committee on the Salaries and Status of Library Workers met on Saturday morning from 8:00 - 10:30 a.m. at the Sheraton Boston Hotel and then again this morning from 8:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. at the same location. The subcommittees met both days immediately following the meeting of the Standing Committee.

I would like to apologize for not having a written report to present to the Council this morning, but as you can see from the schedule, I have come directly from the last of these meetings to this session. But I will assure you that not having a written report doesn't in any way reflect the volume of activity being generated by the Standing Committee and the subcommittees.

The **Pay Equity Bibliography**, which is available on the ALA-APA website, needs to be updated and verified. The subcommittee has committed to getting the updating and verifying of the site done with a target date of June 2005 in time for the annual conference.

The **Advocacy Tool Kit** will be maintained as an online resource that is downloadable. It will be updated this spring and early summer.

"Library Worklife" is starting its second year and the process of renewals will be taking place. The ALA-APA also has a new handout to publicize this online publication. "Library Worklife' has something for (and by) everyone." It highlights recent articles; has information about writing for the publication; as well as, information about how to subscribe.

The Tuesday of National Library Week (April 10-16) will be the second **National Library Workers Day**. We have information and pins available on the website. We would also like to thank President Carol Brey-Casiano

for including funds in her presidential budget to cover the cost of a webcast on the issue of salaries. The plan is to have the webcast live on National Library Workers Day (April 12).

The committee is also looking at establishing a speaker's bureau and will be developing a presentation that can be used when speakers are invited to different events. I spoke at the Massachusetts Library Trustees and Friends Association's Annual Conference in October and have been invited to take part in a panel discussion at the Massachusetts Library Association's Annual Conference in May. I was also asked on Friday if I would be willing to speak at the New England Library Association's Annual Conference next fall. I am sure other members of the committee will receive similar requests.

Thanks to a generous donation from Dynix, we have been able to do some ads publicizing the ALA-APA advocacy video "For Love or Money" and have also been able to produce the video on DVD, closed captioned video and closed caption DVD.

We also have a video guide contest taking place with 16 individuals or groups taking part in designing a guide to the video. We will be announcing the winner during the annual conference.

The Dynix donation also included money that will be used to defer the cost of speakers attending state and regional conferences on behalf of the Standing Committee. As you heard last year, Dynix has also agreed to sponsor an award for a person or persons who have done the most to increase library workers salaries. There have been 25 nominations and the award will be presented at the Networking Breakfast on Sunday morning in Chicago.

There are also a couple of new ALA-APA handouts, one is "Give \$5 in '05" that is the campaign to solicit donations to the APA when members of ALA renew their membership.

And last but not least, the committee is preparing a number of programs for the Chicago Annual Conference as well as a program for PLA 2006 in Boston.

## **COPE 3 Implementation Recommendations**

To stay on top of the status of the <u>COPE 3</u> <u>Implementation Recommendations</u> bookmark - http://www.ala.org/ala/hrdrbucket/3rdcongresson pro/Planning Spreadsheet COPE3.xls

#### Welcome New LSSIRT Members-at-Large: Sandra Olson & Susan Knoche

**Sandra Olson** has worked at Torreyson Library at the University of Central Arkansas for 17 years. She began her library career as a Library



Technical Assistant II, was upgraded to a Library Academic Technician III, and was promoted this past year to Library Supervisor I. She currently serves as the Acquisitions Supervisor. She has served as a member of the UCA

Staff Senate, and was President of the Senate in 2001/2002.

Sandy was a representative to COPE 3, is a member of the ALA, the ALCTS Division, LSSIRT, and the Council on Library/Media Technicians. She has also been active with Arkansas Library Association for 15 years. She was co-founder of the Arkansas Library Paraprofessionals Roundtable, and served as co-chair. After ALPS became a division she served as chair. While a member of ArLA she has served on the Intellectual Freedom committee, the Publications committee, and the Scholarship committee. She was voted Secretary/Treasurer in 2002 and served a two year term. Currently Sandy serves on the LSSIRT Steering Committee, the LSSIRT Certification Task Force, the ALCTS Education Committee, and is Chair of the ArLA Awards Committee. She was a recipient of the Arkansas Library Association Lorrie Shuff Paraprofessional of the Year award in 2002.

Sandy and her husband Rich, who is a master plumber, have been married 32 years. They live in Greenbrier, Arkansas, and are the proud parents of 3 children (Jennifer, Chris, and Eric); they have 3 grandchildren, Ali 4, Breana 2, and Braden 2, and are humble caretakers of 2 dogs (Yoda and Chewbacca), a cat (Peewee), and a bird (Peetree).

#### The 2005 Election will be held online.

If you are a current ALA member (as of 1/31/05) you will receive an email message with voting information around MARCH 15–22.

If you need a paper ballot, contact membership by March 9 at 800-545-2433 (press 5) or membership@ala.org

**Sue Knoche** has been a Medical Library Assistant at East Tennessee State University

Quillen College of Medicine Library since 1988. A member of ALA for three years and recently elected to the LSSIRT Steering Committee as a Member-at-large. Sue is a participant in both



the pay equity and support staff subcommittees of the ALA/APA Standing Committee on Salaries and Status of Library Workers, and was a COPE 3 representative. Honored by Library Journal as Paraprofessional of the Year 2003, Sue also wrote a case scenario for the column "How do you manage" published in the July 2003 issue. She has been a member of the Tennessee Library Association (TLA) since 2000 and has served as vice chair/chair elect, chair, and past chair of the TLA Paraprofessional Roundtable. In August 2004 Sue was appointed to the TLA Staff Development Committee. She is currently responsible for the planning and coordination of a simultaneous workshop in Johnson City with identical programming conducted on the same day in Nashville and Memphis, utilizing local librarians, directors and support staff as instructors in March 2005. She will also present a poster session on cataloging and acquisitions at the annual TLA conference in Nashville, April 2005. Sue is also the new Secretary (2004-2006) of The Boone Tree Library Association, which is a consortium of 22 libraries and businesses that meet bi-annually. Away from the library she enjoys shopping excursions; walking; craft projects; and volunteering for various agencies and/or assisting with organization and participation of special annual events including the American Cancer Society Relay for Life (co-captain of the University team this year). American Diabetes Association (registration captain for 2 years).

Sue is also the only candidate running for LSSIRT Vice-President/President-Elect in the 2005 election.

#### 2005 ELECTION

There will be three LSSIRT Steering Committee positions on the 2005 ballot:

#### **Vice-President/President Elect**

• Susan Knoche (see her bio on pg. 4)

**Members-at-Large** (2 positions to be filled)

- Jack Fitzpatrick is an Information Technology Specialist and heads the IT Unit of the Cataloging Dept at Auburn University Libraries in Auburn, AL. He has been an ALA member since 1997; is a member of LSSIRT and ALCTS; and is active in the Alabama Library Association. He feels that support staff have vital roles to play in the libraries of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and that one of the keys to performing those roles well lies in increased training and development.
- Nina Manning has worked for the New York Public Library System for 25 years and has worked her way up from Page to a full-time Supervising Clerk of the North District. She has been active in her local union, which lead her to getting involved in ALA, LSSIRT, and the Better Salaries Taskforce. Nina is also currently the LSSIRT Membership Chair.
- **Leslie Monsalve-Jones** is a Library Technician at the New Mexico State Library in Santa Fe and works as the State Documents Assistant. She works part-time and is attending classes towards obtaining an AA degree in Library Technology at the Northern New Mexico Community College / Santa Fe Community College. She has been active in the Association for Records Management and Administrators (ARMA). REFORMA - The National Association to Promote Library Services to Spanish and Non-Spanish Speakers, and has, in recent years gotten involved in LSSIRT and the New Mexico Library Association. Leslie is an advocate for getting involved and making a difference.

**Diane Fay,** LSSIRT Past President, is running for an **ALA Councilor-at-Large** seat. Read her letter to the members in the right hand column.

If you would like to run for an ALA Council seat in the 2006 election, please contact Sue Knoche [KNOCHES@mail.etsu.edu] for details. The nominating committee is starting the search for potential candidates to run on the 2006 ballot. It's never too early if you have the desire!

Dear LSSIRT Member:

COPE 3 participants overwhelmingly agreed that LSSIRT needed to move toward a more visible presence within ALA. One way that we can accomplish this is by electing a member of LSSIRT and a support



staff worker to the ALA Council. Last year, three members of LSSIRT ran for Councilor-at-large and made a very good showing by coming within 200 votes of being elected.

This year, I have decided to run again with the hope that we will be successful in electing our first LSSIRT Councilor. With your help we can make this happen. Last year only 80 members of LSSIRT cast ballots. This year we have almost 500 members. If everyone votes, we can elect our first Councilor.

I have worked for 34 years in a variety of support staff positions at the Boston Public Library. During that time I was also an advocate for support staff workers. I brought ESL courses to workers at the BPL who would benefit from being able to take classes during the work week; established a program which gave support staff workers at the BPL the opportunity to attend a local community college, tuition free, if enrolled in courses scheduled before 4:00 p.m. and for half tuition for courses scheduled after 4:00 p.m. I spoke up for support staff to be included in the City of Boston's Supervisory Skills Training Programs and then went on to become an instructor in the program. Ergonomics was a very important issue for the workers, so I wrote and administered a grant which brought a train the trainer program to the library for RSI prevention.

Within ALA, I have served on a number of LSSIRT Committees; am currently the Past President of LSSIRT as well as being the chairperson of the ALA-APA's Standing Committee on the Salaries and Status of Library Workers.

My name will appear on the ballot during the next election cycle. I am asking for your support, and most important, your vote on the upcoming ballot for Councilor-at-large. Thank you for helping me become ALA's first LSSIRT support staff Councilor-at-large.

Diane Fay, LSSIRT Past President

#### 2005 ELECTION continued.....

#### **ALA Presidential Candidates: Response to LSSIRT Questions**

An LSSIRT Committee sent Leslie Burger and Christine Hage four questions and asked for their responses. They were given only a week to respond and as of our Newsletter cutoff date, only one response had been received, which is below, from Leslie Burger. If a response is received from Christine Hage, it will be posted to the SSIRTMEM e-list. For additional information on the candidates, both have web sites- Leslie Burger: http://lb.princetonlibrary.org & Christine Hage: http://www.ChristineLindHage.net

#### Leslie Burger, Candidate for ALA President 2006-2007 Response to LSSIRT Questions

1. What are your views on national certification of library support staff? Should ALA/APA take a leadership role in this area? What are your views on ALA accreditation of Library Technical Assistant (LTA) programs?

I would begin by convening a task force consisting of support staff and library directors to consider the issues that are of most concern in order to determine a specific course of action that might include certification among other approaches. In past surveys, library support staff have identified opportunities for advancement, compensation, and access to continuing education and training as critical issues that must be addressed. What ALA/APA must do is work with support staff to devise the best strategies for leadership in addressing each of these areas.

I support the accreditation of Library Technical Assistant (LTA programs) in order to provide more "gravitas" to the degree program and increase an individual's opportunity to advocate for a better salary. However, I want to ensure that our accreditation criteria do not result in limiting access to LTA programs because of standards that might make it impossible for institutions to comply. Our goal should be to expand access to LTA programs throughout the U.S., ensuring that the quality of the curriculum and the courses offered meet the needs of our institutions, and that participation in such programs improves the salaries of library support staff.

2. Because of limited budgets, increased workloads, retirements, and other reasons, support staff have been assuming many of the "traditional" tasks formerly performed only by MLS librarians. Having been given these tasks, support staff are eager to succeed in performing them. A lack of an MLS degree in no way means a lack of interest or ability, but may mean a lack of knowledge. Can you tell us your thoughts on the training and continuing education of support staff? Do you see a role for ALA in this area, and if so, can you describe it?

I could not run the Princeton Public Library were it not for extraordinary support staff who provide the consistent level of excellent customer service for which we are known. At our library we try to provide opportunities for all staff to contribute in the way in which they feel most comfortable. We provide training and continuing education opportunities both in the library and in offsite locations. Our staff have attended reference skills and customer service workshops and computer training courses, as well as online courses on children's literature. Those enrolled in an MLS program receive tuition reimbursement. Increasingly, we are blurring the lines between our MLS staff and support staff by recognizing that all people in our library have something to contribute to the overall service program not just those with an MLS. ALA can play an important role in increasing awareness in this area. We need to help our MLS librarians understand that allowing support staff to take on some of their traditional responsibilities does not threaten their jobs. Rather, it provides them with additional time and opportunity to focus on expanding or reinventing services to meet changing demands and to assume a leadership role in developing and promoting programs for our community.

3. One message that was repeated time and again at COPE III was the need for inclusiveness among all library workers. It was suggested that ALA should take a leadership role in developing and monitoring a policy to ensure that all library workers are included in ALA initiatives, communications, and programs. Do you agree with this suggestion? If so, what specific steps would you implement during your term of office to improve communications and programs to ensure that all library workers feel a part of ALA? (continued on page 7)

(Leslie Burger response to LSSIRT continued)

I firmly believe that the only way we can effect change and move our libraries forward is to ensure that everyone is "under the tent". We no longer can afford to exclude specific types of libraries or specific member classes--whether they are support staff, trustees, directors, catalogers, etc.--from the discussion on how we succeed in garnering the support we need to advance libraries. As president I would determine the resources and expertise needed for ALA committees and ensure that the right people are at the table for the discussion and establishment of an action agenda. In addition, I would rely on recommendations from LSSIRT for enlisting individuals best suited to serve on key ALA committees and task forces. Moreover, I would encourage LSSIRT and all other roundtables, divisions and committees to nominate members to run for ALA Council as a means to get more involved in the governance of the association.

4. Does a career ladder for support staff need to be established? Would you be agreeable to requesting a cooperative effort between the ALA Divisions and LSSIRT aimed toward developing statements of competencies for library support staff in various specializations (i.e., copy cataloging, acquisitions, circulation, technology, human resources)?

Establishing a career ladder that can be adapted to fit local library situations and developing competency standards makes good sense. In my state, the New Jersey Library Association developed core competencies for children's librarians, reference and information librarians, librarians, as well as technical competencies for librarians; these are an invaluable resource for planning continuing education and training programs at our library. I encourage the development of similar documents for use with support staff, produced through an ALA association-wide effort.

#### 2005 ALA Annual Conference and the Conference Within a Conference: Empowering Library Support Staff for the 21st Century

ALA is proud to present the FIRST EVER two-day (Sat. & Sun., June 25 and 26, 2005) **Conference Within a Conference**, a separate, specially-priced educational opportunity for library support staff!

The event, which will be held in conjunction with the 2005 Annual Conference in Chicago, will offer opportunities for library support staff to come together to learn, network, and share model programming. There will also be opportunities to attend the world's largest library exhibition as well as hear a national list of speakers. Participants will be able to attend workshops on a variety of topics, including reference services, children's services, circulation, health & safety, internal customer service, management skills, technology, advocacy, outreach, bookmobiles, program planning and career development. Don't miss this exciting, history-making event!

The conference is co-sponsored by the ALA Library Support Staff Interests Round Table (LSSIRT) and the Council on Library/Media Technicians (COLT). Registration for LSSIRT and COLT members is \$99 in advance, or \$125 onsite. Nonmembers can register for this two-day conference for \$160 by January 2, \$175 by March 4, \$200 by May 20, or \$250 onsite. If you register for this event only, you can only attend

meetings and programs designated as part of the Conference Within a Conference. If you register for the full ALA Conference, Conference Within a Conference programs are included.

For more information on programming and registration, please visit http://www.ala.org/lssirt and follow links to schedule and registration information. You may use the same form to register for just the Conference Within a Conference or the full ALA Annual Conference. There is an online registration form available, but it cannot be used to register for just the Conference Within a Conference.

In order to receive the \$99 registration rate. Library support staff can join ALA and LSSIRT for \$45. Go to http://www.ala.org/membership/ and scroll down to the Library Support Staff membership section for information and a downloadable application.

#### LSSIRT Meeting

The date and time of the LSSIRT Steering Committee/Membership Meeting in Chicago is still to be determined. Details will be posted on the LSSIRT web site [http://www.ala.org/lssirt/], the SSIRTMEM list, and the May Newsletter.

#### LSSIRT EVENING OUT AT LEONA'S

Join fellow conference attendees for a fun and casual evening out at Leona's Restaurant [http://www.leonas.com]. Dinner is served family style and includes lettuce salad, grilled chicken skewers, BBQ chicken, grilled vegetables, wedge fries, and a choice of chocolate cake or cannoli strawberry shortcake.

Where: Leona's, 646 N. Franklin St., Chicago

Date & Time: June 26, 2005, 7-9 p.m.

Cost: \$35 each

Tickets are available by adding the Event Code "LS1" to the "Other Events" section of your conference registration.

Spouses, partners, and friends are welcome.

#### **COLT Conference & Awards Banquet**

Check out the Council on Library/Media Technicians (COLT) conference and events in Chicago before and during the ALA Conference – http://colt.ucr.edu/events.html

#### New LSSIRT Newsletter Editor

Martha Parsons is the new Editor of the *LSSIRT Newsletter* beginning with this issue. If you have news or information that you would like to share, or would like to send feedback, please contact Martha by email at parsons@halcyon.com.

Thanks to Paulette Feld for her work as Editor. She has freely shared information that has made the transition smooth and is facilitating printing services for this issue.

#### **ALA CE Clearinghouse**

Have you checked out the ALA Continuing Education Clearinghouse? It is a searchable database of current continuing education opportunities offered by ALA, its divisions, and other units. It includes face-to-face workshops and conferences, online learning, as well as workshops that can be licensed by local institutions. A link to it can be found at http://www.ala.org/ala/education/ce/continuinged ucation.htm

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