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International Leads

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Ethiopia, land of origins: A Fulbright experience, part 2

The Tigrigna version of "Back in Time to the Battle of Adwa: African Victory 1896"

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By Janet Lee, Dean of the Library, Regis University, USA
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Editors note: This is the second half of a two-part article on Janet Lee's experience in Axum, Ethiopia, as a Fulbright Scholar. The first half is in the March 2018 issue.

The last few months of my stay as a Fulbright Scholar at Aksum University in Axum, Ethiopia have been a mad rush to close out projects and grants, start saying goodbyes, welcome travelers, and prepare to enter the world.

My stated goals on my Fulbright application (open access journals, implementing a library catalog) were probably overly ambitious. Although there was a will among my colleagues, day-to-day life thwarted many activities. Despite the fact that Ethiopia is building a massive dam on the Nile River (the Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam) and certain areas of the country have immense wind farms, power is still very unstable and does not necessarily reach the very rural areas. Internet services are owned and controlled by the government, which is the sole provider. It can be and has been turned off at will. Connectivity can be sporadic, ranging from fair to excellent at different times of the day. Or sometimes, not at all. Still, over the years I have seen vast improvements in speed and connectivity.

The government-funded university system has grown significantly since my Peace Corps days when there were only three universities. Aksum University is one of ten second-generation universities and each is about ten years old. Like most of the Ethiopian universities, it has a young and enthusiastic faculty and a young administration. One can only imagine the possibilities for the universities when the faculty and administration gain experience and increased education.

I have grown close to a number of my counterparts in the library and the ICT department as we worked together on a library web page or made

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attempts to establish the library catalog. I hope to collaborate further in the future. Although tertiary education is free, only students who pass the national exam are allowed to attend, and not necessarily at their first choice. Most of the universities are at capacity with students, but lack sufficient number of experienced professors and must reach out to countries such as India and the Philippines.

In addition to building relationships at Aksum University, I have had additional opportunities to visit other universities. I can thank Facebook in large part for that as well as my extensive Peace Corps connections. In February I taught a digital library course at Haramaya University, outside of Harar, my old Peace Corps training site. Haramaya one of the oldest universities in the country, is an agricultural college, and has strong ties to Oklahoma State University. The School of Information Science has a well-thought out proposal to start an open access journal, to which I can better contribute when I am back in the U.S. with access to resources and connectivity.

With my ICT counterpart at Aksum University, Eskinder Asmelash, as we discuss the Koha online catalog

While at Axum, Ashenafi Kebede, a colleague from Wolaita Sodo University, whom I met through Peace Corps connections, came to conduct training on the Chromebook lab at the Axumite Heritage Foundation Library (AHFL). The AHFL was the recipient of the first IRRT Mission Enhancement grant. Ashenafi invited me to visit his university and some of the eleven schools where Chromebook labs had been installed. While at Wolaita Sodo University, we brainstormed with university management about future projects, a summer institute, and Sister City partnerships.

Continuing to build partnerships, Mezemir Girma, the expert on the African Storybook Project and I met at the launch of the Global Digital Library in Addis Ababa in April and teamed up to honor a promise I had made to the city of Adama (a Sister City of Aurora, Colorado) to conduct a workshop on children's literature and library services. We were joined by Dorcas Wepukhulu, the African Storybook representative out of Nairobi. We conducted a follow up workshop in Debre Birhan, where Mezemir has a joint bookstore and library. Out of the two workshops we have approximately ten potential books to add to the African Storybook platform in several Ethiopian languages.

With Ashenafi Kebede from Wolaito Sodo University

Introducing children to first language materials is important to me. A strong foundation in the mother tongue facilitates language acquisition in other languages, in the case of Ethiopia, English, the language of secondary and tertiary education. I am fortunate to be able to work with Midako Publishing (facebook.com/Midakobooks/), which has a wide range of picture books, chapter books, and decodeable books used to learn the Fidel (written text), who I contracted with to translate two of the books into Tigrigna, the local language of Tigray, where Axum is located.

A last minute Fulbright meeting was called at Bahr Dar University, near the source of the Nile River. This part of the country was off limits as a Peace Corps Volunteer during the reign of the late Emperor and the early days of the Provisional Military Advisory Committee (Derg) that took over. Here I met some of my fellow Fulbright colleagues as well as new Ambassador's Distinguished Scholars, a new program initiated by the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa to bring experienced American professors to Gondar and Bahr Dar Universities. I also had an opportunity to visit the American Corner library in the Bahr Dar Public Library, allowing me yet another opportunity to pursue obtaining an American Corner library at the Axumite Heritage Foundation Library. I met with the president of

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Message from the Editors

As we wind down 2017/18 and look ahead to 2018/19, we would like to appreciate those who have served and continue to serve the IRRT in various capacities.

We have been fortunate to work with Loida Garcia-Febo as IRRT chair for 2017/2018. We are very proud of your achievements, Loida, and happy for your next gig, the ALA President! Congratulations. Upward and Onward.

A big welcome to our incoming Chair Muzhgan Nazarova and colleagues elected to the IRRT board: Chair-Elect Richard Sapon-White, Member-at-Large Florence N. Mugambi, and Round Table Councilor Sandy Hirsh, as well as members continuing on i.e. Secretary Jeremiah Paschke-Wood and Member-at-Large Julia Gelfand.

Our very best wishes.

Meet the Editors

Rebecca Miller

Rebecca is an independent library consultant, focusing on libraries in developing countries. She specializes in research, strategic planning, outreach, administration/management for libraries. She offers tailored professional development trainings and presentations on these and other topics. Rebecca has over 20 years of experience with libraries, as a practitioner and professor.

Florence Mugambi

Florence is the African Studies Librarian at the Herskovits Library of African Studies, Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, USA. She hase over 10 years of experience as a librarian, and has a strong interest in literacy & establishment of libraries in rural communities of developing countries. She serves as the chair of the Africa Subcommittee, International Relations Committee.

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Message from the IRRT Chair

By Loida Garcia-Febo
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Loida Garcia-Febo reflects on a successful year

As chair, my theme for the year 2017-2018 was ***Library services to immigrants and refugees***. I am happy to report the following notable accomplishments among others:

- ◊ We successfully organized and presented an international webinar series under the Library Services to Immigrants and Refugees theme.
- ◊ We established an Endowment and awarded the first IRRT Mission Enhancement Grant.
- ◊ Team G of the ALA's Emerging Leaders collaborated with IRRT on a project that would help IRRT increase the engagement of international members including new professional leaders in ALA activities.

Much appreciation to all the IRRT members for their contributions to conference programs, online events and to this newsletter. A special mention goes to each one of the Publications Committee members who have increased posts on the IRRT blog and Facebook page. Rebecca and Florence, our IL editors, took this publication to a higher level. Joan Weeks lead an effort to renew our IRRT website within ALA and the results are fantastic. *Muchas gracias* to Delin Guerra from ALA Headquarters for her unwavering support.

My personal thanks go to members of the IRRT Executive Board and committees for their enthusiasm, commitment, and dedication to make things happen. We did it! We had a great year and now we look forward to the next cohort of leaders that will take the IRRT through 2018-2019.

Heartfelt congratulations and a big welcome to our colleagues elected to the IRRT board in ALA's recent elections: Chair-Elect: Richard Sapon-White, Member-at-Large: Florence N. Mugambi, and Round Table Councilor: Sandy Hirsh.

Thanks to the hard work of our committee members, this year we are fortunate to present many programs, including our IRRT Pre-conference at the annual conference in New Orleans to help library workers serve immigrants and refugees in libraries. Personally, I am very happy everyone embraced the Chair's theme and coordinated events featuring models, best practices and recommendations to serve these populations. If you are planning to attend the ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans, do not miss our programs!

I hope to greet many of you at our International Reception at the BB King's Club in New Orleans which is being coordinated by the International Reception Committee. It promises to be a spectacular event.

It was my pleasure to be the IRRT Chair. You all rock! I am very fortunate. This is a most interesting time when I end my term as IRRT Chair and also move from being ALA President-Elect to ALA President. I am looking forward to continue collaborating with my dear international colleagues in that capacity. Stay tuned for news on the ALA communication channels.

See you soon!

Hasta pronto!

The 2018 ALA Emerging Leaders Project with the IRRT

By Lindsay Taylor Inge, linge@umd.edu

The American Libraries Association (ALA) Emerging Leaders (EL) Program is a long-running initiative to introduce new library professionals to the structure of ALA, while also providing networking and service opportunities at the national level.

ALA members with 5 years of experience or less are invited to apply to the program, which is capped at 50 participants. Upon acceptance, ELs commit to attending the ALA Midwinter Meeting and ALA Annual Conference, where they have opportunities to met fellow leaders, participate in leadership workshops, and learn more about how ALA functions. ELs also commit to completing a group project over the duration of the 6-month program.

ALA divisions, units, round tables, committees, task forces, and working groups are invited to submit project proposals for consideration. ELs review project proposals, rank their top 5 choices, and are paired with other ELs who share their interests. The 2018 cohort of ELs include a group working on an International Relations Round Table project proposed by Loida Garcia-Febo, Chair of IRRT. The group is composed of 5 ELs: Twanna Hodge, Lindsay Inge Carpenter, Joi Jackson, Gina Kromhout, and Grace Liu.

The group is charged with identifying new emerging international leaders, building a model for ongoing international engagement in ALA, and developing recommendations for policy that encourage participation of international librarians in ALA.

To address these questions, the group was asked to design, distribute, and analyze a survey of current IRRT members, with the goal of creating a database of responses for IRRT to consult when identifying new emerging international leaders. To respond to the second two charges, the group will write a white paper summarizing their recommendations for engagement and policy. These recommendations are based on survey responses as well as best practices gleaned from other ALA committees.

While working collaboratively in a virtual environment can be a challenge, our group has embraced this opportunity to contribute to IRRT's work in a meaningful way. We began our work during ALA Midwinter, the very same weekend we first met and learned more about the charge.

We developed a workplan, communication plan, and assigned group members to lead different aspects of the project. In the time since then, we have already completed stage one of the project, having distributed and analyzed a survey of current IRRT members.

Under Grace's leadership, the group developed a list of survey questions and solicited feedback from IRRT executive board members, resulting in a strong, detailed survey. We received about an 11% response rate, which is within the typical range for surveys of this kind. Once we finished collecting the data, Joi and Gina took the lead on analyzing the results, combing through qualitative responses and quantitative data to identify themes.

Twanna and Lindsay will take the lead on the project's next two stages, which includes drafting a white paper report and a poster to share at ALA Annual. The white paper will summarize the survey results, and will include recommendations for encouraging engagement and outreach to international members of IRRT.

The poster will be a summary of our work on this project. If you plan to attend ALA Annual 2018, please stop by our poster to learn more about our work! We are so excited about this project, and look forward to sharing it with you all. The Emerging Leaders Poster Session is held on Friday, June 22nd from 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in MCC – Rm 345.

The group would like to thank Loida Garcia-Febo and Delin Guerra for their support and encouragement throughout this project, without which our work would not have been possible. It has been a wonderful opportunity to learn more about ALA, IRRT, and the type of work that goes in to making an organization of this size run effectively.

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For more on the American Library Association Emerging Leaders program, visit the website

http://www.ala.org/educationcareers/leadership/emergingleaders

Fulbright in Ethiopia, continued

Gondar University and we are exploring potential opportunities in the library at Gondar University.

Delays are a matter of fact in Ethiopia. A promised opening of the Axumite Heritage Foundation Library

Discussing children's literature during an African Storybook workshop at the Ras Abebe Aregay Library in Debre Birhan

planned in January was postponed to March/April and delayed once again to May. Instead of a grand opening, yet to be scheduled, we had a "soft" opening where parts of the library were open to the same users of the former library (students 9th grade and above) and not yet to the general public. It has been filled to capacity on a number of occasions since national exams are at the end of the month.

For the past year another volunteer and I have been classifying and processing books, arranging furniture and shelving, taking an inventory of new and used computer equipment, and watching the progress of the building and the grounds. The new building has a stellar children's library, funded in part by an Ethiopia and Eritrea Returned Peace Corps Volunteer grant; an auditorium, complete with projection and sound equipment; a grand reading room; an extensive Ethiopian collection; classroom space; an exhibition room; and meeting rooms. The grounds include shops along the boulevard leading to the stelae, a café, expansive gardens with indigenous trees and shrubs, an outdoor toilet facility, a commercial building, and two guard houses. Paving stones and chiseled stone were set by hand serving as walkways and internal roads leading to the new library and to the renovated Governor's Palace that served as the previous library.

As a Fulbright Scholar and a Returned Peace Corps Volunteer having lived often in Ethiopia, I saw things differently than the typical visitor. Every day was extraordinary. I marveled at everyday life on my frequent walks to visit the stelae, a significant historical site. I was entertained by a troop of monkeys that would jump from tree branch to tree branch outside the Foundation Library, occasionally peeking in a window to check out the action inside, and on more than one occasion walk in the front door. I always considered it a good day when camels passed me by on the way to the market, carrying wood or other goods.

Axum is a deeply religious community following the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewehido Church. The center of the community is St. Mary of Tsion Church, known for housing the Ark of the Covenant. It is next to the grand stelae beds and a short walk to the Queen of Sheba baths. Timket (Epiphany) was held at the baths with boys and young men jumping into the holy water after a lengthy ceremony and collecting water in bottles and other containers. Meskal (Finding of the True Cross) was held in the large courtyard near the church where the lighting of a large bonfire was a major point of attraction. Gena was held the week after western Christmas and Fasika the week following our traditional Easter.

Did I accomplish all I had set out to do? Not a chance. But like Peace Corps service, the opportunities to give back to the community are endless. I have made deep and lasting friendships. I will explore ways to return, be it for the official grand opening of the Axumite Heritage Foundation Library, the Summer Institute at Wolaita Sodo University, a position at Gondar University, or open access journals opportunities. IFLA will be in Athens, Greece in 2019 and could be a meeting point. The possibilities are endless.

Should you apply to become a Fulbright Scholar?

Absolutely. Keep in mind that there are many options ranging from a ten-month stay to a Fulbright Specialist that may be only six weeks long. Take a personal inventory of your skills and examine your strengths. Prior international experience is not a requirement, but can help facilitate your transition into another culture. Have realistic expectations when it comes to research and professional activities. Aim high, but realize that best intentions can be thwarted by everyday circumstances. Practice the local language; it will open doors for you. Take the time to share tea or coffee with your colleagues, the shopkeeper, a driver, or your neighbor. And most of all, open your mind and open your heart.

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Find out more about the Fulbright Scholar program and explore its catalog of awards at https://www.cies.org/

Peace Corps Volunteers: documenting and preserving their work

By Kay Cassell, kcassell@nyc.rr.com

Barbara Ford as ALA President-Elect encouraged returned Peace Corps volunteers to support her presidential theme "Global Reach, Local Touch." Out of this call to returned PC volunteers, the International Relations Round Table's International Sustainable Library Development Interest Group (ISLD) was formed. ISLD serves as a clearinghouse of sustainable community-based library projects in developing areas of the world. The group mobilizes the power of ALA librarians to raise awareness of and make contributions to international library development. Librarians in developing countries can tap into resources for training and projects in their libraries.

Members of ISLD have recently published two articles on the work of Peace Corps volunteers.

◊ *Peace Corps Support of International Sustainable Library Development* by Connie Champlin, Kelly Grogg and Janet Lee (Knowledge Quest, May/June 2018) documents the work of Peace Corps volunteers in establishing library projects. According to the authors, successful library projects need materials appropriate to the community, support of the residents, trained staff and sustainable funding. The article documents library projects, addresses the need for local resources, and discusses cultural challenges.

Examples of library projects include the work of PC volunteers in Lesotho who are partnering with the Ministry of Education and Training and the African Library Project (ALP) to develop and support libraries in this part of rural Africa. They work with each community to develop workable plans for libraries. The ALP collects books and ships them to the library and the Peace Corps volunteers help with the training of local library staff. The Peace Corps has a Partnership Grants Program. Grant applications are written by the PC volunteers and community members. Examples of these grants are: a volunteer in Ghana working with the community to develop a library space for the community to improve their literacy skills; and the Local Library Project in South Africa in a primary school where a larger library space is being developed to expand the book collection.

The need for books in local languages is also of great importance. Janet Lee talks about a book making project in Ethiopia where books are badly needed in the local languages. Book-making workshops were held where local people were given the needed tools to develop cloth books of eight to ten pages in local languages and bound together to share with others.

Kelly Grogg shares the challenges of working in another culture. She says we have to abandon our idea of what a library should be since it may not be what people in another country expect or need. Working in Cambodia she helped the community to develop a library to meet their needs. It was not an American library, but one that worked well for the community.

The Peace Corps has put together materials to assist volunteers who want to start libraries as a secondary project. The Peace Corps states that "volunteers often innocently refer to the libraries they work with as 'my library project,' but our (Peace Corps) materials urge them to remember that it's not their library; it's their community's library."

◊ *International service and cross-cultural engagement: Preserving and documenting the Peace Corps experience* by Patricia A. Wand (C&RL News, April 2018) discusses the work of Peace Corps volunteers in the 56 years of the Peace Corps existence. Wand argues that there are so many stories to collect, preserve and promote. The article aims to confirm that the Peace Corps continues to thrive; encourage information professionals to collect, preserve and promote stories about Peace Corps volunteers; and encourage scholars and researchers to examine the impact of the Peace Corps.

Wand documents some of the collections of Peace Corps materials. The Committee for a Museum of the Peace Corps Experience was established in Portland, Oregon, in 1999. It collects materials from Peace Corps volunteers and aims to educate people about the Peace Corps and preserve its legacy. The RPCV Oral History Archive Project began in 1999 and to date has recorded 610 interviews of returned Peace Corps volunteers. It is housed at the JFK Library. American University has been collecting Peace Corps materials since 1999 and in 2013 established the Peace Corps Community Archive which accepts material generated or collected by Peace Corps volunteers. Other Peace Corps materials are at the Library of Congress and the Smithsonian Institution.

Wand's third goal should not go unnoticed. Research about the impact of the Peace Corps is sorely needed. She encourages librarians to encourage such research.

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To learn more about the Peace Corps Oral History Project check out the website:

https://www.peacecorpsoralhistory.org/cpages/home

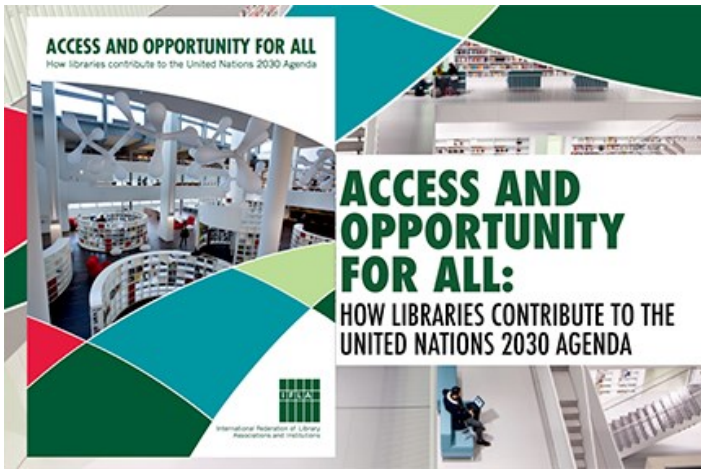
Library Services to people with disabilities: a UN/IFLA project

By Nancy Bolt , nancybolt@earthlink.net

Introduction

In 2015, the United Nations established 17 broad Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for 2030. The goals recommend action on issues like quality education; gender equality; decent work and economic growth; sustainable cities and communities; peace, justice, and strong institutions (which includes access to information); and partnerships for reaching the goals. It is clear, at least to librarians, that libraries could play an important and positive role in achieving these goals. And IFLA, the International Federation of Library Agencies and Institutions, has developed polices and publications to make this point to the UN.

As work was beginning at the UN on implementing these goals, the UN Secretariat of the Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities created a group called



MEDD (Monitoring and Evaluation for Disability-inclusive Development). This group's purpose was to prepare a "Flagship Report" on how the needs of people with disabilities are addressed in the implementation of the SDGs.

The MEDD Committee asked IFLA to appoint a representative for libraries to the group and Nancy Bolt, Secretary of the IFLA Section on Library Services to People with Special Needs, was appointed. The MEDD Committee also asked if IFLA would conduct a survey of how libraries around the world support people with disabilities in relation to the SDGs.

Survey Results

In the fall of 2017, IFLA conducted a survey of all types of libraries, in order to obtain a snapshot of the formal policies, and practical assistance in support of information access – notably through technology – for people with disabilities. 470 complete responses from 92 countries were received.

Libraries with formal policies on accessibility – including physical, resource and program accessibility – were understandably more prevalent in larger libraries (66% of national libraries and 73% of academic ones). Around a third of public and school libraries had policies.

However, many libraries that do not have a formal policy still report both actual accessibility and a commitment to access. For example, the Tampere Public Library in Finland wrote in its survey response:

> *While there is no official access policy, our library serves a great many individuals with disabilities and special needs, including special needs schools, adults and seniors with visual and auditory issues, members of the Deaf community, as well as people in wheelchairs and with walkers. We also serve a vast array of non-neurotypical patrons.*

Despite having the lowest probability of having a formal accessibility policy, 90% of school libraries were physically accessible. This was also the case for 93% of public libraries and 83% of academic libraries. Reflecting their broad mandate, 84% of public libraries offer accessible resources, and 76% provide specific services for people with disabilities. Services were most often adapted to people with mobility and visual disabilities, with just under half of public libraries set up to help the deaf, and around 40% to support people with learning disabilities.

Focusing on public and academic libraries – the types most likely to be used by an adult population as part of education, job-searching, or cultural life – the most commonly offered SDG-related service was access to technology. Not all offered training (although it is possible that respondents did not count informal support). Around 40% offered access to health information, and about a third help in finding work.

There are efforts within the sector to spread the word. Over 40% of responding library associations and around a third of national libraries offer consulting on accessibility issues to others, and over a quarter of responding national libraries provide standards for others to use. 73% of public libraries surveyed are also involved in outreach efforts, with narrative descriptions underlining efforts to collaborate with relevant partner organizations.

Good practices and policy trends

Across the responses received, there was a clear desire to continue improving services, drawing on the good

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practices already in existence. National libraries and national library associations in particular are increasingly taking a leadership role in helping members of the community provide services to people with disabilities. Nearly half of those who responded to the survey say that they are already taking action to make libraries in their country aware of issues and methods related to serving people with disabilities. There are examples of physical accommodation, assistive technology, and special and inclusive programming for physical, emotional, and intellectual disabilities.

For example, in 2017, the Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Associations, a Division of the American Library Association, updated its Library Accessibility Toolkits. These were developed "to help library professionals understand the challenges and opportunities presented by issues of equitable access for library users", and offer guidance in supporting people with a wide range of disabilities.

IFLA's Section on Library Services to People with Special Needs has guidelines on library service to people with dyslexia, people who are deaf or hard of hearing (being revised); prisoners, people with dementia (being revised), and people who are blind and visually impaired.

Individual public libraries also reported increased services to people with disabilities around the world. In Kenya, Electronic Information for Libraries developed and delivered training for 265 children with special needs on how to use tablet computers.

In the Philippines, libraries were rebranded to become "economic enablers." They partnered with other institutions to acquire resources and help people with disabilities learn to make use of computers and other assistive technology, with a view to building digital literacy, workplace skills, and the ability to use eGovernment services. In the U.S., adaptive technology kits are made available, as are adapted workstations for people in wheelchairs.

Many libraries indicated they had plans to improve their services. The two most frequently mentioned trends were rewriting policies (libraries in Georgia, Philippines, Netherlands, Sweden) and renovating buildings to make them accessible (libraries in Angola, Ghana, Chili, Paraguay, and the Philippines).

Barriers to library service to people with disabilities

Three major barriers were identified in the survey relating to library services to people with disabilities: lack of funds, lack of trained staff (be they specialists, or general staff with relevant support), and a lack of outcome evaluation. All are questions that will require time and investment, from the possibility to understand who may need particular support, and in what form, to hardware, software and physical works on the ground.

One disappointing result was the lack of evaluation of the impact of library services to people with disabilities. Libraries too often lack the know-how and resources to evaluate their services from the point of view of the user. The need to ensure that the methodology used allows full participation – for example through large-print surveys, or telephone or online assistance – means additional requirements.

Nonetheless, three positive examples, two from the U.S. and one from Finland, show very high approval ratings. 97% of respondents believed that Oakland Talking Books Service is 'excellent' or 'good', while the Colorado Talking Book Library saw 84% of users underline the value of the service as a means of providing pleasure and keeping their minds active, and over 90% describing it as 'excellent' or 'good'. 16% of the respondents used the resources for school/educationor research. As one Colorado respondent reported:

> "*This has been a God sent for me becuse I am vision disabled and I can not read and I am trying for my GED. I am truening 60 soon I am finding schooling a lot of fun becuse, if you look at it that way you learn more, again thank you for your program. before this I couldn't spell at all. This is after 1y.*" [quoted verbatim].

A study of the Home Library Service of the Tampere City Library in Finland found seven benefits for people with disabilities who could not travel to the library: made everyday life easier, provided stimulating impact, allowed them to keep reading despite their disability, provided a feeling of importance and personal care, allowed for personal improvement, allowed for a level of autonomy despite the disability, and provided stable human relationships.

Conclusions

Libraries can play a significant role in helping people with disabilities get access to information through technology, and valuable supporting services. Basic capacity is in place, as is the desire to help. However, more will need to be done to help libraries assess the needs of their communities, and to understand what they can do to help. Many libraries are unaware of the SDGs but serve people with disabilities as part of their broader commitment to serving their users. Where resources permit –

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and with guidance from standards and policies – they are already making a major contribution to providing technology access and skills.

Concluding remarks

Overall, the importance of libraries, at a time of an increasing dependency on the Internet as a source of information and a growing need for digital and information literacy, is perhaps greater for people with disabilities than even for the population as a whole.

There is a clear interest and capacity in many libraries in supporting people with disabilities, even where formal policies do not exist. Many libraries who were not currently providing services also underlined that they would if they became aware of a need, indicating that more work to help libraries – and others – assess requirements could be valuable.

In the light of the urgency of progress to achieve SDGs, there is undoubtedly value in building on this solid base. A mixture of guidelines and information for institutions, resources, and legal frameworks from governments, and an investment in ensuring that every library is online, in line with the World Summit on the Information Society Principles, will help realize the potential of libraries and access to information to ensure that no-one is left behind.

Resources

Access and Opportunity for All: How Libraries contribute to the United Nations 2030 Agenda

https://www.ifla.org/publications/node/10546

Library Services to People with Disabilities - IFLA contribution to UN report

https://www.ifla.org/publications/node/47193

Services for People with Disabilities in Libraries: Survey

https://www.ifla.org/DE/node/11846

Support IRRT at the conference by attending affiliated programs.

Including the popular International Librarians Reception
Monday, 25 June at the B.B. King Club

Full list is available at http://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/iro/iroactivities/meetingsprograms

Conference website https://2018.alaannual.org/

We look forward to seeing you there!

A Visit to Bastoy Prison Library in Norway

By Nancy Bolt and Erlend Ra

During its mid-term meeting in Oslo, Norway, the Standing Committee of the IFLA Section on Library Services to People with Special Needs (LSN) visited Bastoy Prison, a minimum security prison.

Norway has 43 prisons with 40 of them having libraries. The libraries serve 99 percent of the inmates who are not able to regularly visit libraries outside the prison. The maximum prison sentence in Norway is 21 years. When prisoners have completed all but about three years of their sentence, they are eligible to go to Bastoy Prison, the only prison in Norway that is on an island. The prison is a multi-building complex and a working farm and timber operation with horses, cows, chickens, and some tame fox. It has about 115 inmates who all work at various jobs on the island. Some have the privilege of leaving the island for jobs or school on the mainland, returning every night.

The LSN members reached the prison island via ferry. No photos are allowed of the prison or its inmates except by prison employees.

Everyone who lives in Norway, is by law entitled access to library services. Norway uses what they call the "import model." All services in prison are provided by their counterpart in the closest city including health care, education, and libraries. The Bastoy Prison is located in Horten so the library services are provided by the Horten Public Library. All prison libraries are run by professional librarians and their salaries and the prison library resources are paid for by the Norwegian National Library.

The library director works for the public library, not for the prison, which gives her a degree of independence in making decisions about the collection and activities within the perimeters of prison security. As a branch of a public library, prisoners can receive books through interlibrary loan from any library in Norway. In addition the National Library runs a service that supplies books in 70 different languages to public libraries in Norway. Inmates are very diverse and may collectively speak as many as 20-30 languages. Prisoners do not have access to the Internet in the library but do have limited access to online educational resources in the educational program. Plans are underway for new prisons opening in 2020 to have digital access for inmates.

The Bastoy Prison Library is a small building in the prison complex. There is a small but varied collection of books, magazines, DVDs, and audio books. The reading room is beautifully decorated with inmate made and selected art work. The library is staffed by 4 inmates as a part of the prison's work scheme. The collection includes easy-to-read materials for inmates who are dyslexic or just learning to read and books in several languages. Coffee and tea are available all hours the library is open. The library also offers programming such as movies with popcorn, and this coming summer, a festival with inmate and local bands. There is a reading discussion group where inmates read articles and discuss them.

Tina Hansen, the director, spends about 80% of her time at this prison. In her absence, the inmates staff run the library. In 2017, Ms. Hansen won the 2016 Library Award given by the Norwegian Library Association, Vestdfold County Section for the work of the Prison Library. She was nominated by the free-time staff at the prison.

The prison operates on a principle of normalcy, designed to help prisoners rehabilitate and be able to live peaceably in society when they are released. This is true of the prison library as well. Many of the prisoners have never used a public library before. Therefore, the director tries to teach them what is available so they can use the resources when they return to their local community.

Erlend Ra, Tina Hansen and Knut Michael Nygaard

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Nancy Bolt and Erlend Ra are members of the IFLA Section on Library Services to People with Special Needs Committee.

Erlend Ra is the Information Coordinator/ Senior Advisor at the National Library of Norway.

Tina Hansen is the Director of the Bastoy Prison Library.

Knut Michael Nygaard is with The Norwegian Library of Talking Books and Braille, National Library of Norway.

Conference Report: International Association of School Librarianship's 47th Annual Conference, Istanbul, Turkey

By Carol Youssif, youssifc@tas.tw

Conferences are fun to attend because you are exposed to librarians that work in very different environments from yours. No other such event can claim to be "global" as much as the annual conference held by the International Association of School Librarianship, IASL for short.

I joined this association six years ago, while I was working at an American international school in West Africa. There was a conference in Qatar, and my school was sending me there. I was blown away by the diversity of librarians that attended, and was forever hooked with this organization. As time went on, I decided to help, and became their newsletter editor. Eventually I became their Communications Officer, but after three wonderful years, I passed the baton to the great Laura Davis.

Every year a new committee hosts this conference in a different country. This is done through bidding for hosting, and the last event was held in Long Beach, CA. This year, the Turkish Ministry of Education alongside IASL's regional director Ayse Yuksel-Durukan and her team put together a culturally and professionally rich conference.

Sunday May 6th was the official first day, with a pre-conference workshop and executive and board meetings. The opening ceremony would wait until Monday May 7th, when not only high government officials and esteemed professors spoke, but there was also a local Ottoman music band that amazed everyone with their performance. Kathy Manck, IASL's current president, thrilled everyone with her opening speech, which had a dash of her Texan charm.

Each day of this five-day conference was kickstarted by a keynote speaker, which included Joyce Valenza, renowned library consultant and blogger, but also former IASL president Dr. Diljit Singh. The event was filled with workshops, research presentations, and meetings. IASL uses this conference to host the Special Interest Groups (SIGs) Meetings where librarians from each continent have an opportunity to get together and discuss news and events from their own regions. Personally, I took advantage of meeting other librarians from Asia to discuss local happenings and trends.

One of the highlights of the conferences is that attendees are asked to donate a book from their countries, preferably about it and in their language. These books are donated to the hosting country's school library of choice. Seeing the diverse languages and cultures represented is humbling, and it is fascinating to leaf through the pages.

Conference registration desk

In addition to a book, attendees are asked to bring an item from their country. These items are displayed and a silent auction takes place. You can find unique objects from around the globe for a very reasonable starting bidding price. But those who donate higher-valued items can see those articles go to the highest bidder in the live auction that takes place during the much-awaited Gala. During this dinner there is superb food, a cultural showcase, and often dancing. And dancing there was! Turkish people adore dancing, and at the first few chords of music, many of them jumped up and formed a dance floor to the side of the ballroom. Librarians gone wild!

Overall the conference was a success: streamlined organization, clear signage, a superb venue, real-time translators in English and Turkish, and professional connections that will last a life time. A total of 32 countries were represented, with more than 150 participants in attendance.

Next year's conference will be held in Dubrovnik, Croatia during the month of October. If you want to learn what other countries are doing, or if you want to share your own stellar practices, do not miss the 48th annual conference by the International Association of School Librarianship.

International Library Profile
A librarian in the Galapagos / Un bibliotecario en las Galápagos

By Edgardo Civallero, edgardocivallero@gmail.com

The Galapagos Islands, 1000 km off the Ecuadorian coast, in the eastern Pacific, have been called the *Enchanted Islands*. The Spaniards who discovered them by chance in the sixteenth century believed that they were haunted, so difficult it was to find them and to put them on the navigation chart; the naturalists who visited them two centuries later found that the charms of that handful of volcanic islands and islets were of a very different nature.

A shelter for privateers and whalers, a place of adventures and misfortunes for castaways, colonists and Robinsons, the Galapagos are home for a unique biome: the one which allowed Charles Darwin to build his evolution theory, and many other researchers to understand how life develops in isolated enclaves. They were seriously threatened by invasive species and human pressure, until 1959, when the Ecuadorian government created a national park to protect the archipelago and its surrounding waters.

That same year the Charles Darwin Foundation was created, an NGO that established its base of operations on Santa Cruz Island, near Puerto Ayora. Since 1964, the Charles Darwin Research Station stands there.

And since 1979, in that Station operates the G. T. Corley Smith Library, the most important active information unit on the islands, of which I am the current coordinator.

The library is located in the facilities of the Research Station, half a hundred yards from the sea, surrounded by saltbushes among which the famous Darwin's finches squeak and the native mockingbirds whistle, and under which crawl the equally famous marine iguanas (right now in their nesting season). Before taking this position, someone warned me that wildlife lives closely with researchers and workers at the Station — and the warning turned up to be absolutely true: you can be having a coffee while a finch is jumping on your table, within reach, or you can go to the beach nearby during a break and carefully dodge huge iguanas a meter and a half long all along the way. And, of course, you can also go to the giant turtles' Recovery Center and be enraptured with the big reptiles that gave the name to these islands: huge and beautiful animals, and their little ones, bred in captivity to repopulate the different islands.

The work of the library is, on the one hand, to protect an archive and a legacy collection that make up the in-

Las islas Galápagos, a 1000 km de la costa ecuatoriana, en pleno Pacífico oriental, han sido llamadas "las islas encantadas". Los españoles que las descubrieron por azar en el siglo XVI creían que estaban embrujadas, tan difícil era dar con ellas y ponerlas sobre el mapa; los naturalistas que dos siglos después las visitaron encontraron que los encantos de aquel puñado de islas e islotes volcánicos eran de una naturaleza bien distinta.

Refugio de corsarios y balleneros, lugar de aventuras y desventuras para náufragos, colonos y robinsones, las Galápagos son el hogar de un bioma único, que permitió a Charles Darwin construir su teoría de la evolución, y a muchos otros investigadores comprender como se desarrolla la vida en enclaves aislados. Se vieron seriamente amenazadas debido a las especies invasoras y a la presión humana, hasta que en 1959 el gobierno ecuatoriano creó un parque nacional para proteger el archipiélago y sus aguas adyacentes. Ese mismo año se creó la Fundación Charles Darwin, una ONG que estableció su base de operaciones en isla Santa Cruz, en Bahía de la Academia, cerca de Puerto Ayora. Ahí se levanta desde 1964 la Estación Científica Charles Darwin.

Y desde 1979, en esa Estación funciona la biblioteca G. T. Corley Smith, la unidad de información activa más importante de las islas, de la cual soy, en la actualidad, el coordinador.

La biblioteca se encuentra en las instalaciones de la Estación Científica, a medio centenar de metros del mar, rodeada de un matorral salado entre el cual chirrían los famosos pinzones de Darwin y silban los sinsontes, y bajo el cual deambulan las igualmente célebres iguanas marinas (en este momento en época

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stitutional memory of the Research Station, which in turn is part of the historical memory of these islands. On the other, it consists of organizing all the available scientific production on Galapagos, together with the one produced at the Station itself: this being a relatively small ecosystem, organizing everything that has been written about it is relatively feasible. Finally, it seeks to support the research work of resident and visiting scientists, which ranges from management of fisheries resources and conservation of threatened species to control of invasive species, population monitoring and genetic research.

The profile of the library is complex: it combines that of a specialized institution (a research, academic library) with the one of a very small unit located in an outpost, and provided with wildly variable resources.

The challenge for the future is to ensure that the library has a presence in the virtual world—the Internet service on the islands is terribly slow and unstable—that it can

connect and combine its contents with many others produced by the Charles Darwin Foundation - the digitized biological collections, for example, or the thousands of research data - and, above all, that it goes beyond the limits of the Research Station and connects more proactively and integrally with the local population: a growing population that faces numerous challenges and problems in the near future and needs, therefore, information on conservation, resources and sustainability.

The Corley Smith Library was the first to provide information services on the islands, and has supported much of the intellectual production output of the Charles Darwin Research Station ever since. It must, from now on,

de nidificación). Antes de asumir este puesto alguien me advirtió que en la Estación la fauna silvestre convive estrechamente con los investigadores y trabajadores, y no me engañó: uno puede estar tomándose un café con un pinzón sobre la mesa, al alcance de la mano, o puede acercarse a la playa durante un descanso esquivando cuidadosamente enormes iguanas de metro y medio de largo. Y, por supuesto, también puede acercarse al centro de recuperación de tortugas gigantes y quedarse extasiado con los enormes reptiles que dieron el nombre a estas islas: animales descomunales y hermosos, y sus pequeños, criados en cautividad para ir repoblando las diferentes islas.

El trabajo de la biblioteca es, por un lado, el de proteger un archivo y una colección patrimonial que componen la memoria institucional de la Estación, parte a su vez de la memoria histórica de estas islas. Por el otro, consiste en organizar toda la producción científica disponible sobre las Galápagos, junto a la producida desde la propia Estación: siendo este un ecosistema relativamente pequeño, organizar todo lo que se ha escrito sobre el mismo es relativamente factible. Por último, busca apoyar el trabajo de investigación de los científicos residentes y visitantes, que va desde la gestión de los recursos pesqueros y la conservación de especies amenazadas al manejo de especies invasivas, el monitoreo de poblaciones y la investigación genética.

El perfil de la biblioteca es complejo: combina el de una institución especializada, que apoya investigaciones únicas, con el de una unidad emplazada en un lugar aislado y con recursos variables.

El desafío a futuro es lograr que la biblioteca se asome al mundo virtual —el servicio de conexión a Internet en las islas es terriblemente lento e inestable—, que pueda combinar sus contenidos con otros muchos producidos por la Fundación Charles Darwin —las colecciones biológicas digitalizadas, por ejemplo, o los miles de datos de investigación— y, sobre todo, que salga de los muros de la Estación Científica y se conecte de manera más proactiva e integral con la población local: una población creciente que enfrenta numerosos desafíos y problemas en el futuro cercano y necesita, por ende, de información sobre conservación, recursos y sostenibilidad.

La biblioteca Corley Smith fue la primera en proporcionar servicios de información en las islas, y ha apoyado buena parte de la producción intelectual salida de la Estación Científica Charles Darwin. Debe, a partir de ahora, responder a nuevas realidades (el mundo digital, la referencia virtual, las bases de datos), a nuevos retos (conectar saberes y personas para frenar el deterioro ecológico) y a nuevos escenarios (cambio climático, pérdida de biodiversi-

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A check in with Librarians from around the world

Raymond Pun is an IRRT member and the first year student success librarian at Fresno State. He supports first year students in their research and information literacy. He is an active member of ALA, ACRL, SLA and IFLA. He interviewed two international librarians for this issue of *International Leads*.

An Interview with Chin Loy-Jyoon, Vice President II of the Librarians Association of Malaysia

Ray: Thanks for interviewing with us! Can you briefly tell us about your role in the library?

Chin: I am currently the Vice President II of the Librarians Association of Malaysia or better known as Persatuan Pustakawan Malaysia (PPM), the professional body for the library and information services in Malaysia.

PPM is the national voice representing librarians from all types of libraries in Malaysia and has greatly contributed to the status and development of libraries and library profession in Malaysia.

PPM is a member of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) since 1968. I am also a corresponding member of the IFLA Standing Committee on Management of Library Associations.

I retired as Director of Collection Development, National Library of Malaysia (NLM) in March 2017 after working for 36 years as a librarian. NLM was established under the National Library Act 1972 (Act 80) (Including all amendments since 01 January 2006).

NLM is also the implementing agency for the Deposit of Library Materials Act 1986 (Act 331) where all publishers in Malaysia are required to deposit five copies of printed materials and two copies of non-printed materials to NLM as the national intellectual heritage. NLM has the largest collection of original Malay manuscripts in the world, with 4,884 copies.

I began my career at the NLM as an Assistant Library Officer in 1981 and among the professional duties were indexing the two leading national English newspaper entitled The New Straits Times and The Star, and setting up of the International Standard Book Number (ISBN) in Malaysia where NLM was designated as the National Coordinating Center in Malaysia.

Among my many other professional roles were cataloguer for the NLM collection, reference librarian, and coordinating librarian for interlibrary loans in Malaysia. I also engaged in publications and research, writing and winning grants for projects and the Information Literacy Programme, provided coaching and mentoring to library and information professionals, and managed and monitored the implementation of NLM's Strategic Plan (2014-2018), NLM Transformation Plan(2015-2017), Quality Management System (ISO) and Library policies and procedures.

As the head of International Relations Department, I was responsible for preparing documents for international meetings such as Conference of Directors of National Libraries in Asia Oceania (CDNLAO), Conference of Directors of National Libraries (CDNL), and Congress of South East Asian Librarians (CONSAL), and coordinating and monitoring international projects.

Ray: How did you get into librarianship and what (if any) formal education or training did you receive?

Chin: Although I graduated with a Diploma in the Institute of Chartered Secretaries and Administrators (ICSA), I applied for a job as an Assistant Library Officer at the NLM as I have a passion for libraries since I was young.

After working for 14 years at the NLM, I was awarded a scholarship by the Malaysian government to pursue a Master Degree in Library and Information Studies at the University of Wisconsin - Madison, U.S. (1995-1997). I believed that to be a competent librarian, I must have formal education in librarianship as well as knowledge and experience.

Ray: What is a library trend/library hot topic in your country currently?

Chin: Currently, the library trend in my country is Library Transformation, Innovation and Creativity in delivering library services. Thus, the National Library's theme for the National Transformation Plan for Libraries in Malaysia "Transform Libraries, Transform Societies" with the tagline " Reaching Out to the Hard to Reach" has been adopted as the theme for IFLA WLIC

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2018. The Malaysian libraries' innovations and creativities will be showcased in the Library Boulevard Session during the IFLA WLIC 2018 in Kuala Lumpur from the 24th to 30th August 2018.

As the most prestigious international conference for librarians, it will provide Malaysia the opportunity to showcase the services and facilities that its libraries have to offer and share best practices in librarianship, information management and communication technology with our colleagues from all over the world.

Besides that, IFLA Global Vision and United Nations Sustainable Development Goals will also be discussed in libraries and adopted and implemented into the Library Strategy Plan and Transformation Plan.

Ray: Why is international librarianship important in your work as a librarian?

Chin: International librarianship is important in my work as a librarian because it helps me to develop networking with the international community and professional development; enhance my library knowledge and learn beyond library field and interest; benchmark and exchange ideas and knowledge for best practices to be implemented in Malaysia libraries; and to stay connected with the latest world library trends.

Librarians in the world need to cooperate, collaborate and work together in order to stay relevant in this digital age. Besides that, I have also attended many conferences, courses and training such as JAICA Friendship Programme for the 21st Century, IFLA WLIC DANIDA grant recipient, IFLA Management of Library Associations Workshop and the IFLA Global Vision Workshop for Asia Oceania and Forum for Asia Library Directors to further enhance my professional development.

Ray: Thanks for speaking with us! We appreciate your responses! One last question: if you are working on any special project, can you tell us more about it?

Chin: Librarians Association of Malaysia or PPM celebrated its Diamond Jubilee (1955-2015) : 60 years of leadership and commitment to Librarianship in Malaysia in 2015. To date, PPM has a registered membership of about 1,700 members.

Professionalism in the library profession in Malaysia needs to be given due recognition by upgrading the status of the librarians. In order to achieve that, PPM has initiated numerous awards such as Excellent Library Awards to promote professionalism in libraries; Outstanding Librarian Award and Promising Young Librarian Award to recognize excellence in professional librarians; and the Gold Medal Award to top students from the four Library Schools in Malaysia in recognition of their outstanding academic achievement.

We are now working on an additional award to be implemented next year: Librarian of the Year Award in recognition of librarians for their outstanding contributions to PPM and to the library profession for librarians above 40 years old. PPM is also working hard to have 6th June gazetted as National Librarians' Day by the government and relevant authorities.

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For more about the Librarians Association of Malaysia check their website https://www.ppm55.org/

An Interview with Librarian Antoine Torrens from Compiègne Public Library, France

Ray: Thanks for interviewing with us! Can you briefly tell us about your role in the library?

Antoine: Thanks to you! As the director of a little public library network, I often have a different role every day, sometimes every hour. I try to define, with my colleagues, the right strategy for the library and to connect our projects with our partners: other services in the municipality, local associations, etc. In France, public libraries also have a strong heritage dimension, and the city I work in - Compiègne - has a long royal and imperial tradition. Therefore, my role is also to connect past and present, old books and digital issues, to highlight heritage collection for the public.

Ray: How did you get into librarianship and what (if any) formal education or training did you receive?

Antoine: When I was 12, I wanted to become a librarian. Then I had many other ideas… and I finally rediscovered that it was my dream job when I was 22. The French system differs a lot from the US system: I studied history and Latin to pass some special exams in order to become a civil servant in the heritage field. Then I had a 5 year training in all heritage book issues (paleography, codicology, book history, etc.) as well as in more general library issues (management, information law, digitization processes, etc.).

During that time, I would complete several internships, including two abroad: the first one in the Zentral- und Landesbibliothek, a public library in Berlin, and the last one at the French Cultural Institute in Kyoto, Japan. My first real job was at Dauphine University Library in Paris where I worked with wonderful colleagues during 4 years. I was hired as a public library director one year ago.

Ray: What is a library trend/library hot topic in your country currently?

Antoine: Definitely opening hours. We French are not very good at this: a library is opened in average 84 hours a week in Amsterdam, 88 in New York… and only 38 in Paris. Extending opening hours for libraries was one of our new president's campaign pledges and the government now tries to help cities hire more librarians in order to open libraries later in the evening, and also on Sundays.

Our aim is to adapt to our patrons' habits in order to have a bigger part of society using libraries. To attract new users in the library, we would like to organize more events in our very special venue: our main library in located in an incredible 14th century monastery! Last month, we organized for the first time a rock concert in the cloister garden, it was amazing.

Ray: Why is international librarianship important in your work as a librarian?

Antoine: In my opinion, a library is an access to the word and its knowledge and culture. Therefore, to be a librarian has to be a global mission. One of our missions is be an opportunity for our patrons to broaden their knowledge, to access other cultures' points of view, to discover new ways of thinking. International events such as *Cycling for libraries* trips or IFLA Conferences are incredible opportunities to broaden our experience, to get new ideas and to discover that there are, for our problems, thousands of solutions we wouldn't even think exist.

Ray: Thanks for speaking with us! We appreciate your responses! One last question: if you working on research projects, can you tell us more about it?

Antoine: Within IFLA's New Professionals Special Interest Group, I am currently preparing a session that will take place at the next IFLA Conference in Kuala Lumpur about "Librarian fashion". Should librarians wear uniform? Can we wear tattoos? Should we dress with dignity – and what does dignity mean? It's an exciting topic.

Two years ago, we had a session about failing in libraries: when does a librarian fail? When do we know we failed? Do we really learn by failing? Dealing with these issues at IFLA conferences makes the answers way more interesting than if we had done it in our single countries.

Saint-Corneille library, Compiègne, France

respond to new realities (digital world, virtual reference, databases), to new challenges (connect knowledge and people to stop the ecological deterioration) and to new scenarios (climate change, loss of biodiversity...). And it will do that as it has always done it: step by step, slowly but with determination. Like the huge, tough tortoises.

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The library's website (still under construction) can be found inside the Charles Darwin Foundation's website https://www.darwinfoundation.org/en/about/cdrs/library

Edgardo Civallero is Coordinator, G. T. Corley Smith Library, Charles Darwin Research Station, Puerto Ayora – Santa Cruz Island, Galapagos Islands – Ecuador.

He writes weekly about his experiences in the islands —and his work on other LIS-related topics— in his blog "A librarian in the Galapagos" https://librarianingalapagos.blogspot.com.es/.

dad...). Y lo hará como lo ha hecho siempre: paso a paso, lentamente y con seguridad. Como lo hacen las enormes y resistentes tortugas gigantes.

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El sitio web de la biblioteca (aún en construcción) se encuentra dentro del de la Fundación Charles Darwin https://www.darwinfoundation.org/es/nosotros/eccd/biblioteca

Edgardo Civallero, Coordinador. Biblioteca G. T. Corley Smith, Estación Científica Charles Darwin, Puerto Ayora – Isla Santa Cruz, Islas Galápagos – Ecuador.

Edgardo Civallero publica semanalmente sus experiencias en las islas —y su quehacer en otros ámbitos de la bibliotecología— en su blog "Bibliotecario" http://biblio-tecario.blogspot.com.es.

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