And They Were There-Reports of Meetings

Sever Bordeianu
University of New Mexico

Julia Gelfand
University of California, Irvine

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And They Were There

Reports of Meetings

Column Editors: Sever Bordeianu (U. of New Mexico) <sbordeia@unm.edu>
and Julia Gelfand (UC, Irvine)

ATG encourages reports on meetings. Please contact Sever Bordeianu if you are interested in reporting on a meeting or in suggesting a meeting for review by ATG! — KS


Report by Jack G. Montgomery <MONTGOMERY@law.missouri.edu>

Editor’s note: Jack wrote this report many months ago. I apologize for my tardiness in running the report and remind you that ATG, February 1996 (v.8 #1) ran both Michael Gorman’s and John Secor’s papers from the 1995 Charleston Conference. — KS

The annual Charleston Conference: Issues in Book and Serial Acquisition held at the Lightsey Conference Center in Charleston, South Carolina was special in that the conference celebrated its fifteenth year and has grown to the point that concurrent educational sessions were employed. Approximately 500 librarians, publishers and vendors from all parts of the United States, Great Britain, Europe, and even Russia gathered to review the many issues surrounding our profession today.

The programs began with the first of three keynote addresses by Laura Gasaway, UNCG School of Law entitled “Copyright: What libraries and universities seek in the electronic environment.” Ms. Gasaway outlined four major expectations librarians have for the information environment including a fee, using capacity for electronic titles, increased capacity for interlibrary loans, and the ability to create electronic reserves. Ms. Gasaway noted that libraries have recently been challenged by government agencies who ‘feel the need for a more restrictive information environment.

As an example, a clause within earlier green paper which supported the ability to search/browse electronic titles has been deleted from the 9/15/95 white paper on “Intellectual Property and the National Information Infrastructure.” Ms. Gasaway also indicated that such educational programs as distance learning, common in professional and college extension programs, is threatened by a recent recommendation that ownership of every transmission will remain with the holder of the copyright. Ms. Gasaway’s greatest concern was that all statements concerning the public’s right have somehow disappeared from the earlier text and that in the white paper restrictive license agreements could adversely affect the concept of fair use for many years to come.

The next keynote address was presented by Michael Mellinger of Data Research Associates of St. Louis and was entitled “Object of Desire: Hype and Hope for Next-Generation Systems.” Mr. Mellinger began by quoting the “buzzwords of the 1990s”” from the 1990s: Fears of the “Zehrophobia” in libraries and the need for a more flexible approach to the future. Mr. Mellinger pointed out the importance of the emerging technologies and the need for librarians to be aware of the current trends.

A second keynote address was delivered by Lisa Freeman of the University of Minnesota Press. Tracing the history and traditional role university presses have played in the transmission of scholarly information, Ms. Freeman outlined the rather dismal outlook many university presses face, including the level of subscription and the growing interdependence of libraries to one another. Mr. Mellinger indicated that he was concerned with the increasing centralization of commercial book vending. As a result, most university presses find themselves becoming more commercial, more committed to desktop publishing, more concerned with the marketability of potential titles often resulting in strained relations with their own university faculty. Citing the commonly held myth that electronic publishing will be cheaper, faster and better for scholarly information, Ms. Freeman stated that most work associated with a text is during the pre-publication stage. She added that shifting the responsibility of editing and production to the author results in lessened quality control and reduces the traditional role of peer review and interdiscipli- nary scholarship. Being forced to focus on more commercial titles also threatens the non-profit status of the university press.

After a general discussion session, attendees adjourned to separate meeting rooms for “lively lunches.” Lively lunches were held for discussions and presentations. Topics this first day included — International Resource Sharing and Networking, Approval Plan Core Lists, and Outsourcing.

Following lunch, the attendees regrouped for a CEO panel discussion entitled “Takeovers, Mergers, Acquisitions and Failures: Can you buy your way to the future?” CEOs included Bryan Ingleby of Dawson, Jane Burke of Endeavor, Ward Shaw of CARL and management consultant Gerald Garbacz. This part of the program took the form of a question-and-answer session and first centered on the question of reactions to the trend toward the merger of the companies. All CEOs felt the trend would increase as would problems and occasional failures. Mr. Garbacz indicated that most acquisitions of this kind fail because the company is looking for a quick economic or organizational fix. They succeed when the acquisition fills a specific niche and is part of an overall strategy for growth. Ms. Burke also indicated that the successful merging of corporate cultures is another key element in a successful corporate acquisition. She cited the cultural difficulties posed when trying to work with the ever emerging cultures of Eastern Europe. After a lively discussion, CEOs discussed the business climate and future after a merger. After a break, a second CEO Panel included Mike Markwith (Swets), Dan Tonkery (Readmore), Frans von Eysinga (Wolters Kluwer), Jim Ilsamer (Baker & Taylor), and Fred Phillip (Blackwell North America). At 5PM, the conference officially ended and many conferences attended a 15th Birthday Celebration for the Charleston Conference at the Charleston Visitor Center.

Friday’s program commenced with presentations on document delivery by Chuck Hamaker of LSU and on future trends in acquisitions and collection development by Tony Ferguson of Columbia University. At this point, the conference broke up into simulation sessions on topics as diverse as Project Muse, Acweb and Acqnet, E.D.I., and RowCom Subscribe 96. After reconvening, John Secor of Yankee Book Peddler provided a concise look at “Why some vendors will endure and some will not.” Noting the steady decline in new library vendor start-ups, Mr. Secor cited the long-term decline in library budgets, the lowering of publisher discounts to vendors, and the corresponding demand by libraries for greater discounts and services from the vendors. He feels that the future environment will see vendors unbundling their current service packages toward a continued on page 65

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charge for each service environment. Libraries must be willing to pay for value-added services. Mr. Secor feels that we will witness the demise of several major booksellers and an increase in strategic alliances between those remaining, adding that "failure starts at the top" when we fail to develop a workable vision for the future." Mr. Secor advised library managers to develop similar visions for their own growth. In the question and answer session, Mr. Secor's thoughts were echoed by the audience that many libraries have also suffered from a lack of leadership and vision. Like vendors, libraries, too, need to develop realistic management goals and strategies for their implementation.

Friday's lively lunches centered around the exchange of Exchange Rates, Approval Plan Core Lists, Prompt Cat/PromptSelect and a report on CD ROM Sales by Norman Desmarais of Providence College in Rhode Island. Mr. Desmarais cited several industry studies of the commercial CD-ROM market which indicate the number of titles available are not an indicator of market success. To illustrate, of the approximately ten thousand CD titles currently available, only 111 of those titles actually made a profit last year. With an estimated three thousand new CD titles coming out each year, the competition between producers is great. Despite these statistics for commercial titles, professional CD titles sales topped 1.8 billion in 1994. Problems with CD titles include no effective method of monitoring usage, slow development of high density disks and the slow response time of network CDs. Mr. Desmarais feels that regardless of the problematic, the CD-ROM industry will continue to grow and further standardize its product. He looks to its future with guarded optimism.

During the afternoon, concurrent programs focused on such diverse topics as multicultural acquisitions, setting up a homepage, weeding, and selection and evaluation of electronic resources. During the last hour of the day further sessions focused on buying out-of-print materials, faculty liaisons in the electronic age and organizational problems with Internet resources. The day concluded with the traditional reception held at Charleston's historic Old Exchange Building and included tours of the 18th-century dungeon located in the basement.

Saturday's activities commenced at 7:45 AM with the "Hyde Park Corner Breakfast" an open forum discussion of diverse topics of interest. Much of this Saturday's discussion revolved around problems with CD-ROM interfaces and Internet connectivity and the overall marketing of these products. During the two formal presentations Tom Leonhardt (U. of Oklahoma) and Jack Walsdorf (BNAd) gave sentiments, but historical accounts of their adventures in the book industry and book collecting in general.

After a publisher's panel on the future of scientific publishing, the attendees were entertained, inspired, or annoyed (depending on their own opinions) by Michael Gorman of California State University and author of Future Libraries. Mr. Gorman expressed concern that the "flight into all digital future" is not well conceived." Reminding the audience that "the people of the future will know only that which we preserve," Mr. Gorman speculated that "the saddest person in the 21st century may be the historian," given our current crisis in archival preservation and the myth that mass digitization of resources will solve the current needs. Mr. Gorman stated that we need to move away from what he terms "bumper-sticker thinking" which fosters catch phrases such as "access, not ownership", in place of critical thinking and review, ignoring the fact that the best way to provide access is through ownership. Mr. Gorman outlined that evangelists for the Net attempt to sell us the myth of access to and preservation of all materials, the reality is that if we have to provide informed access to this resource, we will perform a form of informational triage, selecting what is most useful and of highest quality to our patrons. The specter of unenforceable copyright laws in the electronic environment will eventually lead to an unwillingness of the writer to produce what cannot be protected. We must move from the idea that all that matters to patrons is information, as such thinking can only lead to a post-literate society, intoxicated with an electronic Tower of Babel and easily manipulated by those who control it.

This thought was echoed by the next presenter Clifford Lynch who asserted that a library is more than a collection of data connected by search links. He likened the current attempt to create a group of URLs a library to collect every bit of printed information produced in the last 10 years (including restaurant menus, posters, and other ephemeral materials) and calling it a library. As URLs and sites go unorganized, a form of "link rot" will settle in. One could witness this phenomenon already when visiting a site that's no longer at that location or hasn't been maintained in several months. Mr. Lynch feels that the Net will become a part of the raw data from which the new library will be formed, searching must become more refined so as to provide a deeper, better quality of information to the patrons. Mr. Lynch indicated "there is something drastically wrong" with our current generation of search links like the Web Crawler that finds links and process information through some indexing mechanism. Such tools operate as if the entire universe of information is just out there for the scanning. We have produced an information-rich environment with too much relevant information. Consequently, this environment will necessitate the development of new levels of quality review due to the very basic limits of a human's attention span and time to wade through this universe of knowledge. Mr. Lynch posed the question of how do we integrate such quality assessment into our information retrieval systems as currently in our enthusiasm to promote the Net we have forsaken the message for the medium. Mr. Lynch asserts that people will demand better indexing, organization, and quality control of Internet resources, and that these factors will dictate the future of the Internet. Whether or not everyone agreed with Mr.'s Gorman and Lynch, they were both entertaining and provided a welcome balance to the current climate of the almost religious evangelism of the Internet.

The Charleston Conference concluded with a final open forum on copyright and fair use. For many attendees, the yearly Charleston Conference provides a comfortable atmosphere for expanding one's knowledge base, for meeting with and learning from others professionals in our business. As one first-time conferee remarked, "it's so nice to be around a group of people who are interested in the same things you are." With its emphasis on a practical educational experience in an open egalitarian forum, the Charleston Conference will remain a valuable resource for Acquisition, Serials, and Collection Development librarians, for many years to come.

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University of Oklahoma Libraries Conference, March, 1995, Norman, Oklahoma

Report by Linda K. Lewis (U. of New Mexico)

The theme of the conference, held in Norman, Oklahoma, was "Emerging Patterns of Collection Development in Expanding Resource Sharing, Electronic Information and Network Environments." The word that resonated through the presentations was "partnership"; the issues are too complex and too interrelated for any library to act alone, so we must all seek new partnerships, and strengthen existing ones in order to thrive — or even survive.

Harold Billings, University of Texas at Austin, spoke of the role of librarians in managing information and shaping their local collections. Resource sharing is not a new topic, but is becoming more necessary as information expands and funding remains stable. Just as the health care field has moved into managed care, the information field may also move into managed collecting, with organized programs such as the ARL Foreign Acquisitions Program that divides responsibility for collecting by geographic areas. The expansion of electronic resources only adds to the need for cooperative approaches and for the definitions of what must be collected locally.

Genevieve Owens, Bucknell University, used a case study of American Express to suggest possible steps for libraries. American Express had been a traditional company, relying on its image to maintain its earnings. In the face of intense competition from credit cards, which created innovative links with other companies, expanded the services available, and targeted segments of the market, American Express saw its market share drop dramatically. Although libraries may not be continued on page 66

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losing clients yet, as American Express did, this is a time of transition, and the lessons and
eventual rejections of American Express may be
relevant. Libraries must recognize the need
to meet the challenges and competition of new
technologies. Owens suggested that li-
braries must focus on our users to determine
what approaches and services would be most
effective. American Express followed others
into "co-branding," becoming partners with
other companies such as airlines or hotels;
they began offering new services; and they
began targeting specific services to special
customers. In selecting partners, it's crucial to
pick partners carefully so that both benefit
and the needs are complimentary. In offering new
services, such as Bucknell's new interactive
multimedia CD-ROM collection, you must
balance the risks with the benefits. The ability
to target services depends on the library's
ability to gather and manipulate data; not all
systems have sufficient capability in this area,
but libraries should encourage vendors to de-
velop increasingly flexible reporting abilities.

Chuck Hamaker, of Louisiana State
University, tossed out Mardi Gras beads to
the audience, and then spoke about LSU's
cancellation and document delivery efforts.
They asked the science/engineering/agricul-
ture faculty to list the titles needed on site and
the titles for which table-of-contents access
with 24-hour document delivery was suffi-
cient. The library had about 2/3s of the titles
listed by faculty, but didn't have the other 1/3.
The library now knows which faculty mem-
bers consider which titles important; about
44% of their titles are important to only one
faculty member; should that individual leave,
the library can re-evaluate the subscription
to the title. For the journals wanted by the fac-
ulty but not owned by the library, over 20%
would be acceptable with table-of-contents
access and document delivery, and those 20%
turned out to be the more expensive titles.
The faculty also identified some journals that
were already owned by the library as ones where
document delivery would be fine. The library
pursued free document delivery for faculty
and graduate students for the titles canceled.
They have canceled over $600,000 since 1993.
In 1994, they asked the faculty to review col-
lections as part of an overall restructuring rather
than a cancellation project, in order to support
university priorities. They didn't plan for a
cancellation for 1995, but continued to iden-
tify some titles as they evaluated collections,
so did some cancellations and reallocated
funds. It has been a very intense and time-
consuming effort for selectors, and has in-
creased liaison and communication between
the library and the departments. The library
demonstrated the Reveal service from CARL
to departments. They set up unmediated doc-
ument delivery service, paid for by the library,
for faculty and graduate students, via CARL.
This service is managed through their interli-
brary loan section; they have not had to add
staff there. They had very few complaints,
with about a 2% error rate from CARL. In
1994/5, they ordered 2,092 articles from 936
journals, for about $28,000. Of those journals,
only about 20 were requested more than 10
times each. It has meant a change in attitudes,
and a redefinition of where they are building
archival collections. The purpose is service,
and an complete run of an unused journal
doesn't serve their patrons. The library now
has about 8,500 paid subscriptions, a drop
from about 12,000, and purchase about 15,000
to 20,000 books, and they feel they are meet-
ing the research needs of a very active faculty.
Hamaker stressed that librarians must have
hard facts of costs and delivery alternatives
when talking with faculty. In addition to look-
 ing at requests of specific faculty, libraries
must look at the interdisciplinary and multi-
deptartmental interests that are sometimes
missed in traditional reviews by department.
Their experience at LSU is in the sciences; it
might not work as well for the humanities, depend-
 ing on the availability of electronic indexing
and document delivery. On the other hand, if
the science areas, which are the most expen-
sive, can be brought under control, the other
areas might be less problematic to deal with.
Libraries can no longer ignore the issues of
cost-effectiveness.

Kit Kennedy, of Readmore Academic
Services, spoke of partnerships between li-
braries and vendors, in a talk that included
references to John Donne (as the father of
resource sharing), Man is an Island...)
ning dolls, the Oakland Bay Bridge, and
Edith Piaf. You must read this one when
the proceedings are published, since I can't
to justice to it. Partnerships, which may take
many forms, are crucial for libraries and ven-
dors; those that satisfy the needs of both part-
ners will thrive. It is a delicate balance, but
worth pursuing.

Tony Ferguson, of Columbia Univer-
sity, described their use of periodicals price
histories to make subscription and cancella-
tion decisions. He categorized periodicals as
friendly, i.e., those whose price increases aren't
far greater than the increases of the institu-
tional budget, and unfriendly or predatory,
 i.e., those with increases far higher than that
of the institutional budget or national infla-
tion rates. Libraries should look for periodicals
that meet the needs of their users, are of high
quality, are reasonably priced, and have a his-
tory of reasonable price increases. They should
avoid periodicals; wi h a history of outrageous
price increases. The predatory journals take
more and more funds, forcing libraries into
canceling other titles and preventing libraries
from adding newer titles. Columbia used ven-
dor statistics covering 5 years of price histo-
ries. They excluded reference titles, then did a
sampling of titles in five price groupings. They
did find that nearly 2/3 of the titles had in-
creased at a rate equal to or lower than the rate
Columbia's budget had grown, but that the
other predatory journals showed nearly a 200%
mean increase. They found that the social sci-
ces were even more predatory than the sci-
ences, perhaps catching up with earlier sci-
cence increases. The science journals may cost
more, but the social science increases are as
high or higher. They did not find significant
differences between foreign and domestic publish-
ers in the number of friendly or unfriendly
periodicals. They did find that most predatory
journals are published by commercial pub-
lis hers. Ferguson had recommended his rule of S:
(1) Look back at the pricing history when considering subscriptions; (2) Look at spe-
cific titles, not at categories of publishers or
even at a specific publisher; (3) Involve the
faculty; tell them about the worst cases and
tell them about document delivery options for
those titles; (4) Tell the editors and the pub-
lis hers that you are canceling, or not subscrib-
ing, because of their pricing history. And tell
them that you are subscribing in part because
their pricing history has been reasonable; (5)
Cancel loudly; let the faculty, the library com-
nitee, the editor, and the publishers know
why. Currently the publishers, vendors and
libraries and interwound, spiraling down to-
gether; all the games and accusations don't change
the downward fall. Libraries must support the
friendly periodicals and publishers, and work
together in order to make any impact.

William Sittig, of the Library of Con-
gress, spoke about the role of the national
libraries. Most have been responding widely,
often helped by legal deposit requirements,
but budget problems have forced re-adjust-
ments and re-allocation here as well. There is
a growing emphasis on networking and on
distributed responsibilities for collecting.
Changes in government policies, such as charg-
ing for many items previously distributed free,
add to the pressure for re-allocations. Some
are exploring the digitization of their collec-
tions, with hopes for global networking; that
raises the major problems of access, espe-
cially in less-developed areas. The Library of
Congress faces these challenges. It has begun
building distributed responsibilities for collecting,
cooperating with the National Library of Medi-
cine and the Agriculture library to reduce
duplication, and with ARL's Foreign Acquisi-
tions Program to narrow the collect ing ar-
eas. They are reducing serials holdings by
cutting duplicates, reducing foreign subscrip-
tions, and getting only one copy of titles also
available electronically. They are looking for
private funding for special collections. They are
committed to digitization, such as the American
Memory Project, in order to share resources.

Frederick Lynden, of Brown Univer-
sity, talked about whether the future of elec-
tronic information will actually result in re-
source sharing. There are utopian visions of
universal access to comprehensive data, but
does your library maintain collections in the
20th century while re-tooling for the 21st cen-
tury? Libraries are already out of money and
space, with no hope of keeping up with inflation
in the costs of or amount of information.
The future must include more electronic res-
sources and more resource sharing. Electronic
resources bring costs, of course, for the equip-
ment, maintenance, staff time and training,
and copyright fees in many cases. Resource
sharing today may include: coordinated col-
collection development; collaborative collection
development; consortial cost sharing; coop-
ertive holding agreements; consortial shar-
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ing of electronic resources; common interlibrary loan; cooperative or shared storage; cooperative education and expertise; common or linked online systems; and cooperative delivery systems. Real resource sharing means that the requirements of the users are most often satisfied; that the materials are ready when the users need them; that the materials are readily available when the users are looking for them; that savings are realized; that costs are reduced; that resources are increased locally; that resources are shared nationally; that funds can be procured for the partners; that revenue is shared; and that the plan succeeds and remains in place. Resource sharing does seem to be increasing with the growth of technology and information, and partly due to increasing economic pressures. Shared values, shared commitment, and local political realities still determine success.

Although Rebecca Lenzini of CARL UnCover was unable to attend, her paper was presented by a colleague, Ward Shaw, president and founder of CARL Systems, Inc. The paper discussed some of the new players, or partners, in the world of collection development and access. In the past, librarians worked with publishers, serials vendors, book vendors, and online services handling citation databases. Now there are full-text databases, created by companies or individuals; networked CD-ROMs; gateway access services; aggregated services aimed at the home user; individual publishers; individual authors; printers that handle multiple publishers, and probably others. The pricing methods vary widely as well, ranging from charges based on individual transactions to broader licensing agreements. The issues of copyright and royalties are huge. Collection development librarians are now working with many new players, and with many new issues; they must bring their knowledge and skills to the discussions and help shape libraries' relationships within this new world.

The weather was cold, and the Oklahoma winds were indeed sweeping down. Over 100 people from 30 libraries and companies heard and responded to the talks, sharing their opinions about very complex issues.

Born To Network: One Librarian's View of Network+Interop
Las Vegas, April 2-4, 1996

Report by C. Rebecca Garcia
(Product Manager, American Library Services)
<checky@aol.com>

I remember when I was in library school at UT Austin and I had a chance to attend my first ALA. I had such awe at the size of the exhibit hall and the technology I saw there. I couldn't believe the access to information that was available and I had never seen some of the stuff that was being shown everywhere. CD-ROMs, online automation systems, online database services ... it was mind boggling. Plus there was all that great free stuff! I've grown somewhat jaded in the 12 or so years since that first ALA. Working for an automation vendor, I see the upcoming technology as it is being developed and at the show, I'm the one that smiles and gives out free stuff.

Well, I found another conference that inspires that old sense of wonder and awe. I just got back from Network + Interop in Las Vegas, Nevada and if you are at all interested in the new technology, networking or seeing the future of information access, you should have been there too. This conference is big. Really big. About 600 exhibitors and at least 30,000 attendees big. And networking professionals (or those simply interested in the new technologies) come from around the world to attend this conference.

I heard three keynote speakers: Bill Gates, CEO of Microsoft Corporation, Bob Frankenberg, CEO of Novell, Inc., and John Gerdelman, President of Network/MCI Services at MCI Corp. Of the three, John Gerdelman actually had the most visually exciting and well-practiced presentation. He spoke about the coming technology as he saw it and showed a video from the father of the Internet, Vint Cerf, who predicted that by the year 2000 there will be more users on the Internet than there are people in the world.

The reason?

Machines of all types (your car, your fax machine, your printer, etc.) are going to be built with more and more computers inside of them and they will be using the Internet to hook up. Gerdelman sees the convergence of computer and telephone technology as a real growth area. Computer Telephone Integration (CTI or CTT) was one of the most frequently touted new technologies on the exhibit floor (that's another thing — this show helps you learn bigger terms for everyday things like digital phone instructions).

One prime example of the use of computer telephony that MCI is deeply involved in is call centers that combine telephone instructions with computer databases and personal contacts with experts who can answer questions using sophisticated computer databases. Two examples are the new 1-800-MusicNow service and the Compaq help line. Both services make use of telephone instructions and can terminate with a person at a call center who has simply been hired by that company to answer customer questions. These people are not employed by Compaq; they just answer questions for you about Compaq. Talk about outsourcing!

At this point, Mr. Gerdelman said that 80% of all 800-number calls terminate in one of these call centers. Another area that Mr. Gerdelman discussed in detail was Information Centered Networks, which are, as he put it, the next big thing. These actually tie in with Intrarnets as a network based on the principle of a network-based server as opposed to physical connections to specific servers each containing certain information. In an information centered network, files can be stored anywhere on a network and the user would not have to know where these files are in order to access them. Using a specific file name (that, by the way, would not be the unintelligible string of letters and punctuation that are currently used as paths to files but instead would be phonemically meaningful and easily typed), the user could access any file and never know where it resides on a network. We would move from a client/server model (the user's PC being the client and another designated CPU being the server) to a client/network model with the entire network being the user's domain.

Bob Frankenberg's speech centered on the Novell tag line of everything's connected. He talked a lot about client network computing and went head-to-head with the Microsoft announcement of its new foray into the email/messaging world with its MS Exchange software. Frankenberg announced an offer for those loyal Novell Groupwise clients who choose to ignore the blandishments of MS. One very interesting concept he mentioned was the big business of renting software applications online simply for use in opening/viewing/utilizing an email message with an attachment from someone who runs a different software package than you might have. He also had a wonderful presentation of wireless connectivity with their mobile product and a wireless communication device.

Bill Gates' presentation was the one to see and be seen at, however. It was packed, as it always is when this billionaire speaks. For those of you interested in such things, Gates does seem to be dressing better since he has gotten married. As for his presentation, however, it was rather disappointing. The high point of the hour was when the product manager/engineer for the new Exchange integrated email/messaging server software got up and talked about what it was, what it did, the thing and why it took them so long (six years). Formation market, yet library budgets continue to shrink and the latest Internet search engine receives front page news and millions of dollars from investors. There is much work to be done to actively promote libraries and the true value that they contribute to a city, university or school.

On a lighter note, Richard Lee, cartoonist for American Libraries, shared his experiences and perspective on being a Librarian through his drawings and the perfectly timed delivery of a stand-up comic. He reminds us to find the humor in our work and laugh at ourselves. It is good therapy.

Elizabeth Martinez, Executive Director of ALA, joined the gathering to update the NMLA membership on the programs being initiated and defended on a National level in keeping with ALA Goals 2000. She introduced Adam M. Eisgrau, ALA Washington Office, Legislative Council to explain ALA's leadership role in challenging the Communications Decency Act of the Telecommunications Act, signed Feb. 8, by President Clinton. He also commented on ALA's involvement with the Digital Future Coalition, advocates for the public's interest in Intellectual Property issues. Organizers of the conference are to be congratulated for a well planned agenda offering a variety of topics of interest to public, school and academic NMLA members.

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