Letters to the Editor

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From Your (frantic) Editor:

Fall semester has begun with all its frantic-ness. Time to develop new budgets, orient new faculty, finish annual reports, that sort of thing. And to top it all off — my daughter Ileana is getting married in 42 days! Talk about questions, decisions, phone calls, and bills, bills, bills!

I was excited to have this issue to take my mind off all this frantic stuff. Edited by the magnificent Jesse Holden, this issue deals with discovery which is all about search and finding. Follow Scott R. Anderson, Sam Brooks, Eddie Newirth and Harrison Cain, and Virginia Bacon and Ginny Boyer as they help us explore the new information ecosystem that discovery has created.

Our Special Report is by David Parker about Content, Services, Solutions and Space, they are, what great work they are doing, and how they shouldn’t worry about the future of libraries. I would suggest, for example, that inviting a university president who cut libraries and explained why this step was taken is much more useful than inviting one who loves libraries. I’m of the opinion that librarians would learn a lot more from the first speaker than the second.

Conferences on how great librarians are, complete with a symbolic singing of Kumbaya at the end, are great for feeling good but don’t lead to much learning. Hearing from the “enemy” is often one of the best ways to learn how to do better or, at a minimum, to understand an alternative viewpoint.

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Regenstein Library, NERL was founded by Ann Okerson at Yale University in 1996, as a consortium of research libraries that licenses high cost online products on behalf of its membership. Earlier this year NERL entered into a strategic partnership with the Center for Research Libraries (CRL), to afford North American research libraries greater leverage in acquiring and subscribing to key electronic resources, and to shape the terms of access to those resources. On July 1, NERL began operating as a cooperative program under the organizational umbrella of CRL in Chicago.

This is a great issue of ATG guest edited by the awesome Jesse Holden. There are a lot of great papers but the one which caught my eye the most was the one by Scott Anderson about mental models. I liked the shopping analogy and the idea that the unique shopping experience in general merchandise stores may be accomplished in libraries by discovery services.