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Dan Halloran, President and CEO, Academic Book Center

Katina Strauch

Against the Grain

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Interview with Dan Halloran

President and CEO, Academic Book Center

by Katina Strauch

He has been around a long time but he doesn't look like it! Read about the man who started with the Richard Abel Company and is still in business today! — KS

ATG: *Academic Book Center and OCLC recently sent out a press release announcing some type of cooperation between your two organizations. How is this different from other services being offered by other booksellers?*

DH: We had given a lot of thought to the changes in academic libraries and found that they were not just seeking to buy books from booksellers but were really seeking solutions to their problem of the high cost of technical services. Over the last several years booksellers increasingly have been asked to supply a variety of services that had little to do with bookselling. Things like shelf-ready books, machine-readable cataloging, original cataloging, upgrading of CIP records to full MARC, and more. Although we understood libraries' needs for these services we saw that developing these services detracted from our main purpose, selling books. We began looking into how to provide the solutions libraries needed, but in the most professional and efficient manner. About this time **Ellen Waite**, Director of **Loyola University Libraries** in Chicago, and a member of OCLC, encouraged us to be one of the first booksellers to work with OCLC's new **PromptCat** service. Ellen was working with OCLC to find ways of reducing Loyola's cataloging backlog and to get books on the shelf as quickly as possible after receipt. Since Academic was Loyola's main book vendor, it was important that Academic and OCLC work together. After discussions with **Martin Dillon** at OCLC we became one of the first vendors to begin supplying PromptCat data to libraries through OCLC.

ATG: *Did that lead you where you thought?*

DH: In the early stages of **PromptCat** it became obvious to OCLC, libraries, and to us, that not enough CIP records were updated to full MARC at the time books were being sent to libraries on approval. There were a lot of discussions about whether or not PromptCat would be successful if the rate of full MARC was not in the very high 90% range. One solution, taken by some vendors, was to create a CIP upgrade facility in house. We didn't like this for two reasons. First, we are booksellers. Although it is possible to hire professional librarians to develop and manage a project like this, it would detract from the amount of effort we could devote to being a better bookseller. We did some preliminary plans to create the service, but were not enthused. We felt that eventually it would be done by LC, OCLC, or some other appropriate organization for all libraries. Second, it seemed a step backwards to create a proprietary cataloging service. After all, libraries have been moving away from creating cataloging for a very narrow audience. It seemed to us that by developing a CIP upgrade service, which would probably also

do original cataloging, we would be moving backward, not forward. We began thinking about the possibility of working with someone who had the expertise and motivation to provide a high quality service for a wide audience.

ATG: *So you approached OCLC with your idea. How did they react?*

DH: I wish I could claim we were that brilliant. OCLC approached us first, for reasons you would have to discuss with them. We were flattered that the early work we had done on PromptCat and our reputation with some of OCLC's customers gave them enough comfort to actually discuss a project of this magnitude with us. We had some preliminary meetings at last summer's ALA in Chicago, went home to study the implica-

tions, then finalized the details at a meeting in Portland in early August. I must say I was impressed with the people from OCLC: **Martin Dillon**, **Gary Houk**, and **Maureen Finn**. We were able to work out the details of this pioneering arrangement very quickly because of their willingness to understand our needs as booksellers to have certain timeliness and quality standards. It is making the implementation very easy.

ATG: *What is OCLC actually doing in your facility? And is this kind of like a "pilot project"? What are the terms of your agreement with OCLC?*

DH: OCLC has placed three professional catalogers in Academic Book Center. They are OCLC employees and completely under the direction and control of OCLC. Academic has created a filter in its computer system, according to OCLC specs, that directs certain books, from our receipt of firm orders, approvals, and standing orders, to OCLC so that they can upgrade those titles if they only have a CIP record in their Online Union Library Catalog. The catalogers are connected directly to OCLC and make the changes directly in the OCLC system. Since Academic is selling speed of delivery to its customers, we have worked out an arrangement whereby OCLC will complete their work within hours of receiving the books from Academic.

ATG: *Is this just of interest to libraries with approval plans?*

DH: Obviously this is important for the timely receipt of all book orders — firm and approval. For libraries with approval plans it means that they will be able to have full MARC cataloging for almost 100% of their books upon delivery from their vendor. For books with CIP, upgrades will apply to 100% of the books we deliver. If a library combines this with some physical processing, by Academic or OCLC's **TECHPRO** operation, it means that approval books can be on the shelf with a full MARC cataloging record in their OPAC and the set holdings set in OCLC literally

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upon processing the receipt of their approval books. In essence this is a sophisticated automated copy cataloging operation. But rather than searching for a record after the receipt of the book, it is done automatically as part of the process of your book vendor invoicing you for those books. When more individualized cataloging is required, including assignment of a call number, TECHPRO can accommodate that.

Going back to Loyola, they reported at the recent 1995 **Charleston Conference** that using PromptCat and TECHPRO, they have been able to cut their tech services costs by 20%, eliminate a 2-year cataloging backlog, and to get new books, both approvals and firm orders, on their shelves within 10 days of receipt. I think that is why this is so important. It addresses the problem of technical service costs and delays in a professional and economical manner.

ATG: *Do you have to have an approval plan to stay in business these days in the academic and university library environment?*

DH: Booksellers must offer a full-range of services that help libraries control their tech services costs. One of those many services is an approval plan. Academic obviously feels it is important.

ATG: *Other booksellers are also offering enhanced CIP information to libraries. What is the difference between what they are doing and what Academic is doing? Is it a matter of using trained inhouse jobber staff versus trained inhouse bibliographic utility staff?*

DH: There are several significant differences. First, by working with OCLC, and involving publishers who understand the problem, we are solving the problem of CIP upgrades for the 22,000 libraries that use OCLC's services. This is a logical extension of programs like MARC and OCLC, to make cataloging copy available quickly and cheaply, to as many libraries as possible. It seems to me that if every bookseller and bibliographic utility sets up CIP upgrade facilities, the duplication of effort will only lead to higher costs. Second there is the ease-of-use issue. If a library uses OCLC's PromptCat service, records are delivered automatically to the library as part of the bookseller's billing function and the record can include billing and pricing information. The cataloging records arrive before the books. The library then checks in the books, edits the record if necessary, and moves the record to its OPAC. In addition the set-hold in OCLC is done automatically. There are options, controlled by the library, at each step. There is no worrying about having the records available when the books arrive, tape loading to OCLC later on, etc. It is simple, seamless, and straightforward. Third, we don't divert our attention from improving our bookselling business. We can devote all of our management time and other corporate resources to being a great bookseller. And with the world changing so rapidly, that is a big job. In the end I don't see why anyone would want to get into the business of manipulating cataloging records when it is being done quickly and efficiently by an organization like OCLC.

ATG: *I assume that you have some sort of contract with OCLC. What happens in the long term?*

DH: Academic and OCLC have a contract that lays out the rights and responsibilities of each party. We are now working out

the bugs in procedures and getting to know how to work together. So far we have had no serious problems. In the long run we hope this project will mean that libraries will not have to worry about complete and accurate cataloging records when they receive books. It will already be done. But there is another piece that needs to be put in place. We are trying to educate publishers about the importance of this project. If publishers will work with OCLC and Academic to supply one of the first copies of all new titles off of their press, they can help to insure that all books will have a full MARC record at the time libraries begin to order and receive these new titles. One frustration is that many publishers, even those who attend the Charleston Conference, do not understand the importance of helping to reduce libraries' technical services costs. There are a couple, like **Academic Press, ITP, Simon & Schuster, Harper Collins, and Penguin**, who understand the importance of working on this with us. Unfortunately there are others who will need a lot more education. Maybe we can provide some positive publicity for those publishers who cooperate and let libraries draw their own implications about publishers who don't seem to care or understand what this means to their library customers. Our hope is that through the cooperation of OCLC, Academic Book Center, and publishers, we can reduce the time and cost of getting books ordered, delivered, and on the shelf.

ATG: *We seem to have talked more about OCLC than about you and Academic. Can you tell us something about Academic? Describe the operation. How many people work for Academic? Are they all based in Portland? And is it a privately-held corporation?*

DH: Academic was founded in early 1975, almost 21 years ago. We are located in Portland, Oregon and offer a full range of services including Firm Orders, Approvals, Standing Orders, and book processing. We have a staff of about 100. Our mission has expanded from being just a bookseller to providing solutions to libraries' technical services problems. This sounds a bit pretentious, but really recognizes that libraries have real costs associated with their relations with us. If we design and execute our services with this in mind, we can help libraries control costs. This means providing fast, accurate service and very intelligent and responsive customer service. **Barry Fast** and I have equal ownership in the company. In addition we have an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) that gives stock in the company to its employees. We are becoming an employee-owned company, sort of the United Airlines of booksellers.

ATG: *I seem to remember that you were another of those "Abel" people. How did you get into bookselling?*

DH: I graduated in 1968 with a degree in Political Science and Middle East studies. That qualifies you either to do graduate work, and I was not a great student, or work for the government, which many of my friends did. I was awaiting a security clearance with the National Security Agency when President Johnson put on a hiring freeze in August, 1968. My father, having just invested in 4 years of college for me, suggested I look for "real" work, a prospect that had never really occurred to me. Lacking any clear sense of what I wanted to do with my life, I went to the university's counseling office for some career guidance and began tramping the streets. Two interesting things happened there. One of the tests I took had you answer pages of questions about your likes and dislikes. Your answers were correlated with those of people in different profes-

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sions. The result was a bar graph showing your top ten career choices. The psychologist explained all of this then showed me the results. The two longest bars, showing the highest correlation, were librarian and accountant. In an instant, I had new career options. That afternoon I had my final interview with a company and was offered a job, as a management trainee with the **Richard Abel & Co.** Twenty-seven years later, I can say that I have absolutely no regrets about the choice that I made. I have been able to combine two professions into a life-long career.

ATG: So you got to see both the golden days and the not so golden days of the Abel company. There has been a lot written and discussed about those times. As a real "insider", is there anything you will share with us?

DH: It was the best of times and it was the worst of times. Dick changed the way that libraries throughout the world do collections development and acquisitions. And, he presaged many if not most

"Many publishers do not understand the importance of reducing a library's technical services costs."

of the developments we see today. All companies selling books to the academic community owe the ideas behind their basic services to Dick Abel. There is little if anything that is really new since Dick developed his comprehensive firm order, standing order, and approval services. All of us have added new features and I believe execute these services far better than the old Abel company did. But the basic ideas are Dick's and he should be recognized and applauded for his insights at the time. They are still valid and with us today.

Dick was able to attract a number of interesting, intelligent, and some downright weird people. In my early years I worked closely with some people who taught me a lot about books, bookselling, and life. I particularly remember **Jim Cameron**, **Aaron Saady**, and **Al May** as people who had a profound effect on my life. I owe them a lot for putting up with a very brash and probably arrogant kid but teaching me something about honesty, dignity, and integrity. Sounds kind of corny, but it's true. I should probably be politic at this time and not mention people in the weird category. But, if you want to buy me a cold beer at a library convention I can probably be cajoled into telling some stories.

ATG: And what about the worst of times? Why do you think that **Richard Abel & Co.** couldn't make it as a company?

DH: If I say worst it will be unfair. I think the downfall also lay with Dick, in a way typical of entrepreneurs. Essentially, he refused to turn the company over to professional managers and it got away from him. I believe to this day that if he had had better managers, whom he trusted, he would have survived and prospered. He had a strong vision of what he wanted his company to be; he just did not or would not have a strong management group around him.

ATG: So how did you get from Abel to **Academic Book Center**?

DH: After Abel's demise, I was hired by **Jim Cameron** as **Blackwell North America's** first sales rep. I was living in Chicago and was given responsibility for 13 states and for helping to set up BNA's customer service operation in New Jersey. In April of 1975 the people who started Academic approached me about starting a similar operation in Chicago. I leapt at the chance. In 1980 I moved

back to Portland to help manage the growth of the company. About 5 years later, the partnership came apart for a variety of reasons, as partnerships often do, and I emerged as the Chairman and CEO of Academic and my previous partners left to pursue other interests. It was also at this time that **Barry Fast**, whom I had known for several years, became an equal owner and partner in the business. The fact that this partnership has endured for almost ten years, through some difficult decisions, encourages me to believe it will be very long lasting. Since then we have concentrated on divesting ourselves of extraneous activities like publishing, distribution for publishers, and running businesses only marginally connected to selling books to college and university libraries. There you have 20 years of my life in a couple of sentences.

ATG: You have another employee who is very well known in libraries, **Bob Schatz**. How did he become associated with Academic and what is his role?

DH: Bob graduated from the **Univ. of Oregon Library School** at a time when library jobs were in very short supply, especially in the Western U.S. In the course of doing some library job hunting, he heard about Academic and sought us out. His first job was compiling mailing and phone lists for some direct mail activities. Since then, Bob has taken on a variety of tasks for Academic including being a sales rep, streamlining and developing our approval plan, an important member of our Management Committee, and he is currently Director of Sales both domestic and international. Barry and I consider Bob to be a true partner. I must say I am envious of Bob; he can fall back on a previous career, waiting on tables, easier than I can go back and try to be an academic or a spy.

I should also mention several other very key staff. Bob may get the publicity but **John Knapp**, Systems Development, **Jackie Cooney**, Operations, and **Lorene Dortch**, Approvals are also key contributors to our success.

ATG: Here's the same old question. What is the future going to be for booksellers? Aren't you going to be put out of business by computers and the transfer of information on the Internet? These days, do you have to be big in order to survive?

DH: First let me say that the only accurate prediction you can make about the future is that it will be different. Trying to make accurate predictions, particularly today when technology is changing so rapidly, is very risky. Technology will bring changes to libraries and information transfer. At some point we will see some profound developments that will completely change the way information is produced, transferred, stored, and paid for. There will be a major "paradigm shift" when this happens and I don't think any of us have a clue what it will look like. That doesn't mean we are sitting by doing nothing.

We have already talked about Academic's alliance with OCLC. This is very important because we believe that bringing the best organizations together to solve problems for a large audience is very important. As I mentioned earlier, we want to continue this process with systems vendors and with the active involvement of libraries. We will know we have really succeeded when we get publishers to truly be a part of this community. The future, within the paradigm in which we now work, will involve more of this type of collaboration. I will leave speculation on what the paradigm shift will look like to others.

But, I don't want to gloss over the absolutely essential change in the way we develop our most important resource, our employees. I know that every organization, whether it is a library, a government organization, or a for-profit company, wastes a tremendous amount

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of talent. This is not a failing of the employees. It is a failing of owners and managers to understand how much intelligence, information, and ability is locked up in its employees. It is a failing of owners and managers to create an environment and the training to tap into that talent.

ATG: So are you talking about "empowerment"? I hate that word!

DH: I hate that word, too, because it makes it too easy for people to spout the latest management theory buzz word and think they have changed their organization. Too many managers get "religion," march into a staff meeting and declare, "We are an empowered workplace, and you, the employees, are now empowered." When we looked at changing the way we ran our business, we realized that this would be a process, not a project, and would involve fundamental changes in many aspects of the business.

ATG: Like what?

DH: Like how much information you share, more is better; like what skills are needed to really participate in decision-making and where employees get them; like what kind of people you recruit and hire; like how much time and money do you spend on staff development; and much more. It is a complete change in patterns of thinking and the prerogatives and behaviors of owners, managers, and supervisors. It is much more than just spouting the latest management theory from the *Harvard Business Review*.

We have an active, ongoing education program for all employees, from the newest hires to the owners who think they have learned all of the tricks. We actively teach skills like listening, giving constructive feedback, problem-solving, and conducting meetings. If you will excuse the jargon, it has become part of our "culture." If we are having a meeting and it starts late, the agenda isn't clear, or one or another of our basic rules is broken, it is the right and responsibility of anyone in the meeting to call the facilitator to task, even if the facilitator is me. I have to model the behavior I expect from others and be willing to be held accountable to the same standards. If I set myself above this culture, no one else will respect it.

I can tell you the first time a new staff member, fresh from our training program, reminded me that the meeting was running over the time allotted and I had not polled the attendees on whether or not to continue, I wondered what monster I was creating. But when I look at the vast improvement in the quality of our service, the reduction in turnover, and our ability to run much more efficiently, I am reassured I have made the right decision. I cannot imagine going back to the old days. The importance of this for the future is that although we cannot predict what it will look like we are creating an organization and a culture that can respond quickly and intelligently to the changes that will come.

ATG: Will libraries be able to see anything concrete from this?

DH: I think so. Eighteen months ago we were only delivering about 20% of a library's books in the first month. We weren't the worst, but the performance didn't inspire anyone either. We decided to look at all of our procedures and most importantly included the people who were actually doing the work. This may seem

obvious, but too often managers think they really know what is going on in their departments and don't need to take staff away from production. I can assure you this isn't the case very often, just ask some of your staff.

Through this process we were able to make some very significant changes in our procedures. Today, we are shipping around 45% of the books within 30 days of receiving an order. We have set a goal of supplying either a book or a real report on 95% of orders within 6 weeks. A real report does not include "Claiming from the publisher." Currently we are at 89% and the graph is inching up. Our goal is to meet our standard by July 1, 1996. This type of improvement would not be possible without the full and active involvement of all appropriate staff. We also have made our Approval and Firm Order databases available to customers over the Internet. Since we envision libraries accessing these primarily for acquisitions needs, ordering, claiming, canceling, etc., we asked the people who perform these functions in our organization to be on the design team. We think the interface we have developed is intuitive and easy to use without having to know arcane commands or constantly refer to a user's manual. It reflects the input of our staff. Longer range there will be integrated access to all of our databases, faster and more accurate delivery of books, and just a tighter more efficient feel to our services. Give credit to our staff, it will be the work they have done.

ATG: One thing I am curious about is the fact that libraries seem to be spending a lot of money on books still. Can you give us any indication of volumes of orders that you are receiving right now versus ten years ago? There still seems to be a robust library market for books, isn't there, or else you would be anxiously looking for another venue.

DH: There is still a market for books but I would not describe it as robust. ARL statistics show a decrease of about 22% in the actual number of monographs purchased by ARL

libraries over the last 10 years. What has happened is that serials expenditures have increased 93% during this period and a significant amount of money has gone into automation. Theoretically the expenditures on automation has allowed libraries to become more efficient. All of this has happened at a time when library budgets, as a percentage of total university budgets, has declined. We have seen our sales volume increase but this is because we are increasing our market share and finding new markets.

ATG: Can you talk about your international markets? How much have they increased in the past ten years? Is the overall market for English language books going up? Can you tell us something about your non-American library clients and their needs for services and books?

DH: We have been working with libraries in over 30 countries and 4 continents for the past 15 years. Academic has developed a real expertise in analyzing new markets and working through the legal, cultural, and logistical issues in order to provide quality service to libraries in different parts of the world. It takes a long time to work through these barriers to entry in foreign markets. Librarians have seen booksellers come in once or twice and not return because of how difficult it was to establish themselves. Our setting up marketing offices in South Korea, Singapore, Australia, and South Africa and a small transshipment office in the U.K. has also helped to send the message we are in this for the long term.

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The significant amount of time and money we have invested in these markets, by coming back year after year, is now paying off. More than once our outside directors have questioned the investment we made. In most of the foreign markets we serve, librarians have very high expectations about service. They are less tolerant of wrong books, delays in delivery, or any deviation from perfection. Part of the change we had to make to serve these new customers

"I cannot imagine going back to the old days."

was to improve the quality of our services. It has challenged us but also made us a better bookseller. We offer these libraries the same services we offer our domestic customers but we are asked to supply more bibliographic information and provide education about the realities of bookselling in North America.

ATG: How many booksellers are out there these days who you consider your competitors? I was looking through *Melcher On Acquisitions* and many of the firms that are listed there are no longer with us.

DH: There are probably 10 significant booksellers selling to college and university libraries in North America plus 1 huge competitor, publishers. I am always surprised at the amount libraries purchase directly from publishers. At a time when libraries are trying to cut costs, it seems strange that they would spend the extra time and money to go direct.

ATG: Can you talk about new marketing initiatives by both booksellers and publishers? I have noticed much more marketing

by booksellers of sets of books than used to be the case. Also the Internet is full of homepages and other marketing techniques. When, for example, is Academic going to have a homepage and what kind of thing will be on it?

DH: Academic will have a homepage within the next 6 - 9 months. The issue is not how to do it, the technology is really very easy, but what to offer. Obviously we will provide access to our databases, which are already available over the Internet for selection, ordering, and claiming, through a Website. The big question is what other value can we provide libraries beyond obvious information about the company, pictures of staff, and links to other pages. We have some interesting ideas, but I will wait until we are ready to announce the development before tipping my hand. On the other topic of marketing sets of books, Academic has been doing this for more than 20 years. We discovered that when libraries buy expensive sets, we make money. Apparently other booksellers have just discovered this phenomenon.

ATG: Before we close can you tell me something about **Dan Halloran**, your background, family life and what you do when not selling books?

DH: I was born and raised in Portland, Oregon. My parents were from Minnesota and Wisconsin and came to the Northwest during the Second World War. I graduated from Portland State University but also studied Arabic at Princeton and Turkish at UCLA. I have an older sister living in Montana and a younger brother in the Portland area.

I have been married for 27 years to my wife, **Karen**. She developed an American Studies course, a combination of American History and American Literature which she teaches, as well as a Psychology course, at a local high school. My son, **Timothy**, is 17

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responsible for ALL of their accounts which means that you have to follow up to make sure that your patrons have access.

Right now, I am working on getting signatory authority in the library. At present, we need to run all contracts through someone who represents the legal office. The university has a chief contracting officer. Contracts get pushed back and forth, buried. The contracting officer is responsible for everything like this so he or she is incredibly rushed and is more interested in the legalese, the indemnities, waivers and what state's law is involved (they only want to deal in Virginia!). I have to look at the whole contract and find out the kind of equipment that is used, the number of simultaneous users, etc. We would like to get away from having to run everything through the contracting officer. It would be better for everyone. And that's just the agreements that we know about and that we have to sign. There are all those "shrinkwrap" agreements that come in the door with the material!

ATG: Yes. Let's talk about those.

CK: Shrinkwrap agreements are something else again. They aren't negotiated. It comes with the packaging of the product and more and more of the major producers are going to this kind of agreement. It is scary because it gives the institution no opportunity to negotiate on those sections that may be a problem for them.

Tricia Davis at Ohio has done a lot of work on this issue. I was talking to **Lolly Gasaway** [one of the speakers] at the **Charleston Conference** about this. Lolly says in the next year there may be a change in the Uniform Commercial Code (UCC) which may give shrinkwrap agreements more force. This whole area is a big problem. Once you open a package, you've supposedly already agreed to something that you haven't read until you opened it! Often we have students opening the mail and part of their job is to take shrinkwrap off and they don't read the agreements. I am starting to file the agreements right now. I have a four-drawer filing cabinet just for contracts and I've only been at this since July and have already filled up the first drawer! It's a question of how many of the contracts are still alive? What happens when the company ceases to exist? And what about products that are bundled together when you buy them? I have a lot of concerns about these things because in any given library nobody knows what is happening with all of them. For a control freak like me, this is a problem!

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and a junior in high school. We are just beginning to investigate colleges for him. His ideal college is some place that is warm and has an easily accessible golf course. There are obviously some "family" discussions in our future.

In my spare time I do a number of things. Several years ago I formed a book group. Six of us meet monthly and discuss our latest book (last month was **Robert Owen Butler's Good Scent from a Strange Mountain**) and drink Oregon wines and beer. These are ideal evenings. In addition I play tennis on a regular basis with another group of friends and recently have exchanged running for

ATG: You were organizing an acquisitions librarian support group in Virginia?

CK: Yes, before I got married. I was organizing an acquisitions librarians support group. Now David is taking up my spare time. But the support group did have a mini meeting in Charleston. I hope to have another meeting in the Spring and to get together with more of the Acquisitions Librarians throughout the year. All of us are rather pushed these days, as you well know, so getting a local meeting together gets set aside. We do talk a lot by phone and email, but face-to-face is more than we can manage most of the time. Thanks to you, we still have the Charleston Conference!

David and I just bought a 24 by 24 foot "getaway" house in the country about two and half miles from the Chesapeake Bay. Bought it from a man who didn't think he wanted to sell! We are moving furniture into it this weekend. It's interesting that the things that you have an excess of are not what you need!

ATG: Isn't that true! Before we sign off, tell us more. What are you reading? What are your hobbies? Whatever you want to tell us ...

The Great Fire, October 27, 1895
Holsinger Studio Collection

CK: Actually, I am one of those librarians who really likes to read! There seems to be less time for this since David entered my life as we do spend a lot of time talking and

laughing, so it's not a dead loss! I never miss a new **Joan Hess** or **Rita Mae Brown** mystery and CAN squeeze them into the spare minutes. I have been painting shirts for the women in the family for Christmas presents and do enjoy it, but should have got started sooner as there are a lot of women in David's family — 9 to be exact. This is something that I would like to get into on a money-making basis when time allows — maybe I will retire someday. It hardly seems fair that I've been working at the University for 30 years and STILL can't retire. Especially when I share a house with two retired people and three cats who don't know the meaning of the word WORK. Since David and I between us own three houses and live in a fourth, the chances of any more spare time seem unlikely — just enough for a few books, a few shirts, some sailing, and lots of laughter. 🐾

Well, Connie says that she has so many tools (when you put hers and David's together, plus she inherited her Dad's!) that she could start a construction company! Is she using remote storage?

biking. I try to keep intellectually and physically busy all of the time. I find having a number of different groups and activities gives me new perspectives. In all, I feel very lucky to be in a business and job I love, living in an unparalleled part of the world, and having a wonderful family. I am really a very lucky and fortunate person. 🐾

Y'all, you know, a lot of this interview is true! For example, we had to wind up so that Dan could go play tennis at the end of the day. So be careful when you write him an e-mail at <danh@acbc.com> He might zap it right back! — KS

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