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And They Were There-Reports of Meetings-The VII Transborder Library Forum, NFAIS, and ALA

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And They Were There

Reports of Meetings

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VII Transborder Library Forum = VII Foro Transfronterizo de Bibliotecas

Report by **Ann Massmann** and **Elizabeth Steinhagen** (U. of New Mexico
General Library)

This tri-national library conference, held in Ciudad Juarez (Mexico) February 20-22, 1997, attracted close to 300 participants from Mexico, Canada, and the US. Begun in 1991 in Arizona, with the idea of bringing Mexican and US librarians working in bordering states closer together to exchange ideas on possible cooperative projects, it has been held since then in alternating US and Mexican locations. A few years ago, Canadian librarians were also invited to participate, especially those living close to the US bor-

der, but given the geography of the area, the majority of the participants have normally come from the US-Mexican border states.

Appropriately titled "**Building information bridges = Construyendo puentes informativos**," the Seventh Forum was symbolized by a bridge spanning books and computers, representing also the several bridges that connect the two countries across the Rio Grande, called Rio Bravo on the Mexican side. Ciudad Juarez is a sister city of El Paso, and the population from both sides of the border make this area the largest two-nation urban settlement, with nearly 1.5 million inhabitants. The ambitious 3-day program, developed by **Dr. J. Lau**, Chair of the Organizing Committee and **Director of the Library of Universidad Autonoma de Ciudad Juarez**, included among others, preconference workshops on Web-page design, an update on information resources available on the Internet, on OPAC choices, and a number of simultaneous sessions of

interest to librarians working in user services, user education, with archives, and in technical services.

There were a number of general sessions and panels devoted to the overall issues and problems facing libraries in the global environment. Guest and keynote speakers included **Barbara J. Ford**, incoming ALA President, and her Mexican colleague, **Elsa M. Ramirez L.**, President of the Mexican Library Association (AMBAC), **Phyllis B. Spies**, International Vice-President of OCLC, **Sylvia Piggot**, President of SLA, and **Guadalupe Carrion R.**, formerly very involved in training and education of Mexican librarians and at present Executive of Information Resources at **INFOTEC**, a library consulting firm.

Catalogers on both sides of the border were very interested in discussions and presentations having to do with retrospective and ongoing cataloging and, especially, with

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authority control issues. Just as libraries in US cities with large Hispanic populations are attempting to provide services in Spanish to these users, many Mexican librarians are struggling to build databases that provide wider access to their collections, through retrospective conversion and online cataloging of these resources. There are a number of institutions and their personnel, working in relative isolation, trying to accomplish this in the most efficient manner, by using the new technologies available and by relying on international standards to convert and transfer data. However, a major obstacle faced by all in this undertaking appears to be the lack of universally-accepted Spanish language authority files, both for names and, especially, for subject headings. Several efforts have been made in the past in a number of Spanish-speaking countries to translate the **Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH)** but to-date, only a few, incomplete, machine-readable files exist in countries such as Venezuela, Chile, and now in Mexico, and the printed lists have not been updated.

Among other presentations, many of those having to do with Internet access and library automation, attracted the largest audiences. While speakers and participants seemed to agree on the costs of international cooperation, there was consensus that we could not afford not to cooperate across the borders. Some of the exchange programs, donations, consulting, and fellowships have been rather successful to date, but in order to optimize the diminishing resources everywhere, these efforts must be increased and ties must be strengthened with regular professional exchanges. One speaker mentioned that benchmarking should be applied in libraries, to identify and apply the best practices, to learn from others, since established routines can often mean the worst type of service. According to keynote speaker **Phyllis Spies of OCLC**, librarians have moved from being custodians of books to information providers, and globalization and its impact on the library community has brought about monumental changes in our services. We all need more interlibrary loans and document delivery, and the existing and developing international standards are essential for sharing of data across borders. In order to successfully participate in sharing of resources, there needs to be a shift in our thinking from library to information and from a function focus to a strategic focus, we need more continuing education for our staffs, we need to develop new policies in library cooperation, and we need to use open standards, not closed systems.

At the "**Local Archives, International Challenges**" session, two archivists from the U.S. and one from Mexico profiled the

activities of their archives, including current collecting and access projects. The institutions differ by type (a state, a university, and a religious archive), but all three have a common link through Spanish Colonial archives. In the U.S.-Mexico border region, archives represent a natural area of transborder information sharing. Numerous archives on both sides of the border contain resources which reflect the common Spanish and Mexican governmental and religious structures which once spanned the area that today is divided by an international boundary. In addition to the historical and geographic links, these archival records cross borders for reasons of use as well, since transborder academic and community interest has steadily increased over past decades.

Kinga Perzynska, the **Director of the Catholic Archives of Texas** in Austin made the first presentation, speaking on the history and holdings of her institution. The archive holds a range of church records,

including: a Spanish and Mexican Manuscript Collection, 1519-1890; Ecclesiastic Records, 1703-1881; and Religious Orders in Mexico Records, 1690-1812. Three years ago, the Archives published *The Guide to the Spanish and Mexican Manuscript Collection at the Catholic Archives of Texas* (Perzynska, and Dedra S. McDonald, compilers, 1994). This guide is the major access tool for researchers and was made possible through federal NHPRC funds.

Alfonso Vasquez Sotelo, **Director of the Instituto Estatal de Documentacion in Saltillo, Coahuila**, detailed his state archives and records management agency's forward-looking projects. They have been particularly active in assisting and training the area's municipal archives employees as well as state employees in records management and preservation. The Instituto has digitized its holdings of colonial documents and is currently creating a CD-ROM with images and text. Demonstrating the archives' place in both the digital and the media age, Vasquez also showed a video presentation to profile the archives' activities.

Walter Brem, **Assistant Curator of the Bancroft Collections (Latin Americana)**, **University of California at Berkeley**, was the third presenter, giving an overview of the Bancroft Library's collections. The Bancroft is one of the pre-eminent collec-

tors of materials relating to Mexico, Central America, and the U.S. West and Southwest, including both primary and secondary source materials on these areas. Of particular note are the electronic access projects at the Bancroft, including the **Berkeley Finding Aid Project**, which began in 1993 to develop a prototype standard for encoding archive and library finding aids in the form of a SGML DTD. Since 1995, the developing standard was renamed **Encoded Archival Description (EAD)** and has been worked on in conjunction with the **Library of Congress** and the **Society of American Archivists**. Further information is available from the Bancroft Library's Website <www.lib.berkeley.edu.-BANC/>.

The archival session was chaired by **Claudia Rivers**, Head of Special Collections at the **University of Texas at El Paso Library**. She stressed the commonalities of the different institutions relating to acquisitions, preservation and access of their materials. She also expressed the hope that this session would be a step toward more communication and cooperation between Mexican and U.S. archivists.

Some of the discussion groups centered their efforts on professional education and exchange options. At this time, there are six library schools in Mexico, but the total number of graduates comes to about 2,500 since 1945, which in a country as large as Mexico, is obviously not enough to satisfy current needs. At present there is no accreditation process for library schools, since the universities are constitutionally guaranteed absolute autonomy. The graduates of these programs obtain a "licenciatura," which, according to **Prof. Nahum Perez** of the **Escuela Nacional de Biblioteconomia y Archivonomia (ENBA)** corresponds to somewhere between an American Bachelors' and Masters' degrees. Thus there is great interest in continuing education, in exchanges with US librarians, in becoming more knowledgeable about new technologies, and in the use of the English language.

At one of the discussion groups, called "Transborder Cooperation and the FORO," two librarians (**Karen Stabler**, of **New Mexico State University**, and **Amelia Chavez**, of **Centro de Investigacion Cientifica y de Educacion Superior de Ensenada**), talked about the exchange projects in which they have been involved. A lively discussion followed the presentations, with participants and the presenters providing suggestions for increased cooperative efforts between librarians in both countries. Educational benefits were mentioned as important for both the exchange librarian and the host institution and several attendees also brought up the need for specific efforts from library and archival organizations. For example, the **Texas Library Association** now has a **Texas-Mexico Re-**

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lations Committee which provides exchange opportunities and the Society of Southwest Archivists is interested in hosting an upcoming meeting in northern Mexico. As a possible vehicle for communication, the FORO already has an electronic listserv (FORO-L), and there were suggestions for a special section devoted to exchange programs and related information. Participants agreed on the need to continue these discussions.

One of the highlights of the conference was the opportunity for librarians to visit area libraries on both sides of the border. In Ciudad Juarez, one of the most impressive was the modern **Central Library of the Universidad Autonoma de Ciudad Juarez**. Its new library building was dedicated in 1995 and it can serve about 300 simultaneous users, with a collection of about 50,000 monographic volumes, about 500 periodical titles, over 100,000 documents in microformats, a collection of state and national maps, over 80 CD-ROM databases, access to over 450 online databases, and collections of videos and music. Its professional staff of 9 librarians is the largest in Northwestern Mexico, and its computer and telecommunication facilities, including a state-of-the-art video-conferencing room, are one of the best in the region, with close to 100 computers.

For the U.S. libraries tours, participants crossed the international bridge, to the **University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) Library** and to the **New Mexico State University (NMSU) Library**. Librarians on the UTEP tour were especially impressed by the large number of special collection and rare books in Spanish, as well as a large collection of books on **Pancho Villa**. Buildings on the UTEP campus feature a unique architectural style, adapted to resemble that of the dry, mountainous country of Bhutan, near the Indian-Chinese border region. The library building is one of the newer and most notable examples of this style, modeled after a Buddhist monastery.

Twenty-five Mexican librarians participated in the tour of the **NMSU libraries**, which showcased a brand new science and technology building, as well as a newly renovated building for the social sciences. The librarians were particularly interested in the fulltext Web databases in use by the libraries, as well as a CD-ROM LAN. NMSU also has a new electronic classroom, with 24 Pentium PCs used for online and research instruction.

All three institutions (UACJ, UTEP and NMSU) played an important role in the success of FORO VII. They also counted on assistance from the **El Paso Community College Learning Resource Center** and the three area library associations: the **Border Regional Library Association** (El Paso,

Juarez, and Las Cruces libraries); the **Texas Library Association**, District 6; and the **El Paso Chapter of Reforma (National Association to Promote Library Services to the Spanish Speaking)**.

NFAIS — National Federation of Abstracting and Information Services

Report by **Judy Luther**
<jluther@earthlink.net>

The **NFAIS (National Federation of Abstracting and Information Services)** annual conference was held in Philadelphia on February 23-26 in the Park Hyatt at the Bellevue with the theme "Publishing in the New Millennium II: Managing the Transition, Product Development and Marketing on the World Wide Web. **Dick Kaser**, Executive Director of NFAIS, noted that this year's conference had a practical focus compared to last year's visionary approach.

Bob Massie, Director of *Chemical Abstracts Service*, in his keynote address titled "The Future is Now," presented data on the rapid growth of the Web pointing out that 25% of the 828,000 domains were (.com) commercial hosts. Bob noted that the Web has impacted our business in four ways.

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Disintermediation occurs when Web interfaces are used to provide access to information rather than rely on traditional content providers who are now on the Web. Although there are lower barriers to entry for companies with powerful search engines, content providers are often the only source of backfiles of high quality data. The Web offers customers the opportunity to aggregate information from a variety of sources, and content providers are countering with value-added services such as combining corporate data with data from the content provider. Increased customer expectations for speed, utility, and features, are prompting rapid development schedules and new pricing policies.

A Panel titled "Seeing is Believing: Using the Web for Publishing Initiatives To-

multiple databases selected by the user, will decide in the future where to go to find the requested information.

David Macdonald from **Personal Library Software**, pointed out the value of precision recall as the number of relevant items retrieved, compared to the number of relevant items in a database, rather than the total number of items in a database. **Paul Albert** from **Questel Orbit** explained their use of PLS as a search engine for patents and **Kathi Canese** from the **National Library of Medicine** gave a detailed description of **Grateful Med**.

Dr. Toni Carbo, Dean of the School of Information Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh, began Tuesday by delivering the **Miles Conrad Memorial Lecture**. Entitled "Just for You Services on the Information Highway," Toni noted three trends occurring in the industry. Multimedia docu-

create **Circular A-130** addressing federal information, noted the two areas needing more development: the collection of data from the states, such as birth/death records, and the need for records management, such as rules regarding the destruction of tapes and diskettes by the White House.

David Lipman, from the **National Center for Biotechnology Information** described the capability in **PubMed** to search by protein sequences and structures and then link to related sequences and articles. **Don Johnson**, from the **National Technical Information Service (NTIS)** presented creative arrangements that have been developed to extend the availability and enhance the utility of federal publications. **Jane Bortnick Griffith** from the **Congressional Information Service** identified new information issues on the hill. **Joe Ebersole**, an attorney and **David Mirchin** from **SilverPlatter** spoke to copyright and the Internet.

Wednesday morning focused on dealing with the issues raised by library consortia. **Julia Blixrud** from the **Association of Research Libraries** set the stage by pointing out that there is no clear definition of consortia, so publishers are confronted with diverse groups wanting to load data centrally, be billed collectively or simply have a discounted price for all member institutions. **Ann Okerson** from **Yale University** noted that half of the 30 consortia who met collectively in St. Louis, fund projects from existing budgets.

Mike Johnson, Director of **CHEST (U.K.'s Combined Higher Education Software Team)** gave a humorous comparison of negotiations in the U.S. vs. the U.K. concluding that although there are the same vendors, interests and problems, the beer in the U.K. is definitely better. **Tom Sanville**, Executive Director of **OhioLink**, offered a checklist for publishers including: content, quality of the data, nature of the interface, and the ability to integrate the database with other activities. Libraries want to own, not rent, data and access to archival copies is necessary.

Ken Metzner, from **Academic Press** spoke about their experiences in site licensing the PDF fulltext files of 175 journals. Pricing under the subscription model does not address usage and there are a host of questions about how to use the data collected in determining future pricing models. **Marcia Kaufman** from **Engineering Information** offered a good summary of publisher concerns, noting that publishers are interested in more deals. **Jay Trolley** from the **Institute for Scientific Information** noted the transition from print to electronic in the last nine years reached 74% of sales at ISI. Libraries want flexible and consistent licensing policies.

Clifford Lynch, from the **University of California**, offered his perspectives in con-

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"... users will not pay for information if they think that it is available to them free."

day" permitted the audience to view eight presentations (most were off-line) on the following Web based products: **Blackwell's Electronic Journal Navigator**, **Engineering Information's EI Village**, **BioMedNet**, **Elsevier's Science Direct**, **Academic Press' IDEAL**, **Chemical Abstracts' patent information**, **Information Access' InSite** for business professionals, **UMI's ProQuest Direct Online**.

Hot Topics on interlibrary loan, electronic journals and copyright matters were scheduled after lunch. **Randy Marcinko**, of **Marcinko Enterprises** presented the results of a document delivery survey which indicated that the average cost is still \$11.40 for the document and \$5.50 for copyright with an average turnaround of 5.5 days. **Isabel Czech** from the **Institute for Scientific Information** identified that 75 of the 160 peer-reviewed journals that they were evaluating for inclusion in their database are in electronic form only and ISI expects to expand their coverage from 6 to 20 journals by the end of 1997. **Bonnie Lawlor** from **UMI**, noted that the copyright issues on database protection, access to government information, fair use, and Internet II remain to be addressed in 1997.

The final session of the day on Web Interfaces, included two speakers from the software industry, one of whom, **Steve Kirsch**, Chairman of **Infoseek**, noted that users will not pay for information if they think that it is available to them free. Currently, distributed data is searched on the Web through a centralized index such as **Infoseek** or **Altavista**. Today's meta search clients which simultaneously search mul-

ments in electronic form function differently than print versions and require new ways to manage and preserve information. Providing access to this information will require new skills which Toni dubbed "mediacy" in addition to "literacy." Creating "just for you" customized information services is the next evolutionary step, following "just-in-case" collections, and "just-in-time" document delivery.

The morning session on Intranets in the corporate environment began with **Lee Love** from **Netscape Communications** who provided an excellent understanding of why companies experience a tremendous payoff from Intranets (from 1400-1766%). Since Intranets are platform independent, they allow users to access information whether their workstations are IBM or Mac, freeing IT departments to choose different vendors and technology. He was followed by **Carol Ginsburg**, from **Bankers Trust Company** and **John Ganly** from the **New York Public Library** who addressed the use of Intranets within their organizations.

Over lunch, **Harry Collier** of **Infonautics, Ltd.** raised some interesting questions about the applications of copyright law in an electronic environment. Noting that the written expression of ideas is protected rather than the idea itself, Harry suggested that it will be difficult to prosecute offenders since the law is based on where you are, (rather than who you are), and he wondered how a geographic point will be defined in cyberspace.

Tuesday afternoon focused on federal information, followed by two legal perspectives. **Dr. Timothy Sprehe** who worked to

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clusion and asked the challenging questions that need to be addressed. If a fulltext journal is included in multiple databases, how will the library deal with paying twice for the same information? How quickly will standards advance to provide addressable URL's for articles, and how we will authenticate users who are offsite without requiring passwords? There is pressure for abstracting and indexing services to shorten their processing time as fulltext material is available more quickly electronically.

**San Francisco — ALA Annual Conference,
report on "post- outsourcing"**

Report by **Elizabeth N. Steinhagen** (U. of New Mexico)

At the recent **ALA Annual Conference**, held in San Francisco June 27 to July 2, 1997, outsourcing was no longer the hot issue it had been during the two previous years. However, and although some librarians appear to have accepted the situation, or at least have learned to adapt to it, it is still an important and controversial topic. Several programs had been planned for the conference discussing the pros and cons as well as the results of some major outsourcing plans, such as the Hawaii fiasco.

One of these post-outsourcing sessions, titled "Vendor Supplied Cataloging: The Pros and Cons" was held June 30, 1997. A panel consisting of three technical services librarians and a vendor explored some of the benefits and disadvantages of contract cataloging by an outside vendor. **Cynthia Whitacre**, manager of **OCLC's Technical Processing Department**, talked about the various services available from the utility to help libraries deal with new acquisitions or backlogs. **PromptCat**, a batch cataloging service for mostly new titles will have a new release in September of 1997. OCLC is now working with eight vendors and about 40 libraries to provide **MARC** records with their new, mostly approval plan books. Later in the fall, through phase 2, they will be able to supply files of label sets, with copy and or volume information, location data, and alternate call numbers, if required. **TechPro** is a customized contract cataloging service for all formats and is used by libraries mainly for special projects, including serials cataloging or conversion. In addition, other services available are retrocon, bibliographic records, and authority control.

Next, **Dawn Bastian** and **John Blosser**, of **Northwestern University** talked about a workflow study conducted at their library to compare the costs of searching **OCLC** and cataloging in-house to the cost of **PromptCat** **MARC** record services. They examined and priced out four approval book workflows in-house to make this comparison. As part of the study's overview, they considered changes in the current in-house workflow which may yield better cost efficiency than any gained with outsourcing part of the workload.

After analyzing the results of the various workflows, they discovered that more cost savings are likely to be gained through refining the workflows than by adopting **PromptCat** at this time. While the cheapest workflow calls for **OCLC** searching and cataloging to be done at point of receiving by lower staff level, they may still adopt the most efficient — but not cheapest — workflow, which calls for searching and cataloging to be done at point of receipt by only one staff person, but at a higher classification. Through consultation with other libraries, the authors have concluded that using **PromptCat** has made the most positive impact in smaller academic libraries where turn-around times have been reduced with significant cost savings through outsourcing.

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Looking Ahead

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Cecily Johns of the University of California, Santa Barbara, talked about using vendor-provided MARC records in a "fastcat" operation. The Fastcat unit in Acquisitions handles Blackwell's "MARC with books" service for a 90% match for their domestic approval books. The vendor supplies fully upgraded MARC records and an additional table of contents service — thus cataloging and processing of these titles is completed in Acquisitions, at the point of receipt. UCSB also loads MARCIVE records for documents.

According to Johns, advantages of this service are as follows:

- the goals are met, in that books get to the shelves faster, the records include more complete bibliographic information, books with full copy are handled by staff at lower levels, and there has been a considerable reduction of steps needed in the process;
- processing has been streamlined in Ac-

quisitions with the addition of the Fastcat unit;

- upgrading of CIP has been eliminated, with the savings of one FTE staff position;
- the process has been speeded up by about two months; and
- the quality of cataloging records has not suffered.

Disadvantages can be perceived in the following areas:

- a delay of about one week does occur in receipt of the approval books;
- some duplication does occur (about 0.5%);
- some spine labels are incorrect;
- initial staff resistance to the plan, which has diminished by now;
- some training and coordination issues have surfaced which caused a redesign of the workflow.

Last, Karen Wilhoit, of Wright State University fame spoke of the current situation at her institution, two years after they outsourced all cataloging in 1995. After

eliminating the whole Catalog department, they contracted with OCLC TechPro for original cataloging, including item creation, with PromptCat for their Yankee approval program, and with Autographics for their government documents MARC records. Prior to outsourcing, they had estimated their in-house cataloging costs at about \$17 per title, versus about \$5 per title with TechPro.

Wilhoit mentioned that all this resulted in enormous savings in staff costs and in much more streamlined processing, which gets books to the stacks within a week and the bibliographic records in the catalog at the same time. Thus Technical Services at Wright State is moving to PromptCat for most of their receipts, while fine-tuning their TechPro contract. Wilhoit saw no problems with the quality of incoming records, 65% of which are DLC and 25% member copy. The disadvantages she mentioned had to do with the drastic staffing cuts which left her department with little flexibility to deal with new developments, and/or special projects.

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ceased their assault on our bastion of knowledge. We were exhausted. But we had survived.

I shook my head and looked around. The endless miles of sand and dunes reformed into book shelves and carpet. The stone fortress became the paper-cluttered wooden reference desk. I noticed that Bill was looking at me funny.

"Are you all right," he said cautiously. "You look a bit glassy eyed."

I rubbed my eyes and peered into the stacks. "Yea, I'll make it. Just thinking that it's quiet out there ... too quiet."

"Huh?" said Bill.

"Oh, nothing. Just thinking."

Bill scratched his head. "Well, better you than me. I'm not on the desk today. I just came here to check my schedule and ..."

"Oh my god," said Margot.

"What?" blurted Bill and I as we turned to the now bloodied "volunteer."

Margot had a pained look in her eyes as she stared out across the library. "Oh my god," she said slowly. "Here they come again."

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and identified my favorites. I invite you to send me <ferguson@columbia.edu> your suggestions on any other alternatives that occur to you, or ideas on which of the listed alternatives you think should be adopted. I will collect them and feature them in a future column. I fear that unless we develop more innovative solutions to the STM journal pricing problem, we will have a lot in common with the frog in the warming water. By the time we discover it isn't a Jacuzzi tub, it will be too late.

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