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And They Were There - Reports of Meetings

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And They Were There — Reports of Meetings

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74th Annual Meeting, PTPL (Potomac Technical Processing Librarians) George Mason University, Johnson Center — October 23, 1998

Report by **Kathy Miraglia** (Catholic University of America) & (PTPL Treasurer) <miraglia@cua.edu>

See **PTPL Webpage** (<http://www.lib.virginia.edu/ptpl>) for Keynote Address and information about PTPL.

Technical Service Librarians from Washington, D.C., Virginia and Maryland attended the 74th Annual Meeting of the PTPL (Potomac Technical Processing Librarians) held at George Mason University, Johnson Center on Friday, October 23, 1998. The early part of the morning was spent on tours of the George W. Johnson Center which provides a non-traditional housing of library materials (videos, CD's, books, serials, etc.). The open library stacks mix with a variety of services—banking, food court, bookstore, copy center, computer store, offices, study areas, and more. The official part of the program opened with the introduction of Keynote Speaker, **Janet Swan Hill**, President of **ALCTS** and Associate Director for Technical Services at **University of Colorado, Boulder**. Her entertaining and interesting speech, mixed with humor at times, gave insight into the role and image of technical service librarians and their contributions to librarianship. Ms. Hill has allowed us to reproduce her speech, in its entirety, on the PTPL Webpage.

After a pleasant lunch, also at the Johnson Center, a short business meeting was conducted and then the afternoon session began. In the afternoon session a panel discussed "To Merge or Not to Merge: Libraries and Computer Centers." **Robin Wagner**, Director of Library Services, **Gettysburg College**, related their experience with a merger attempt. Unfortunately, aspects of failure were built in from the start: no real advance notice, no advance discussions, lack of communication, no real understanding of the independent operations (how they might be the same or how they were different), the jamming together of both staffs in one building, and differences in job descriptions and pay scales. It didn't take too long for the 1994 merger to break apart, but not before the entire campus was affected and both operations were impaired.

Nancy Dagle, Associate Director of Library and Information Services, **Bucknell**, spun an entirely different scenario. Bucknell, in 1997, also undertook the merger of the library and computing services. From the start it was managed better, and included library input. The success of the merger, she feels, was the result of cooperation, adequate communication and planning, staff involvement, and a understanding of human nature. Also, the two operations still maintain separate work-

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Acquiring Minds Want to Know — How Many Librarians Would It Take ...

Column Editor: **Joyce L. Ogburn** (AUL for Information Resources and Systems, Old Dominion University Library, Norfolk VA 23529-0256; phone 757-683-4189; fax 757-683-5767) <jogburn@odu.edu>

I thought for a change I would add a little humor to my column and play around with a variation of the old joke "how many librarians does it take to change a light bulb." The impetus for this came when I was writing a presentation on integrating electronic materials into library collections and was pondering the complexity of this process.

So bear with me and have a little fun with this. I would love to hear variations from our readers. In this version the joke doesn't hinge on the characteristics of the librarian, but rather on those of the light bulb.

If a light bulb were an electronic resource, how many librarians would it take to change a light bulb?

- 💡 One to select the light bulb. 💡 One to set up a demo of it.
- 💡 One to negotiate a contract to use it. 💡 One to determine how powerful the bulb should be. 💡 One to determine how many people can use the light. 💡 One to make sure the electricity is turned on. 💡 One to pay the electric bill. 💡 One to make sure it has been installed correctly. 💡 One to check to make sure it keeps working. 💡 One to make sure it stays in the same place.

- 💡 One to teach people how to use the bulb. 💡 One to advertise the existence of the bulb. 💡 One to see if anyone is using the light and how. 💡 One to describe the bulb. 💡 One to manage authorized access to the bulb. 💡 A committee to write the RFP to acquire the light bulb. 💡 A committee to review the effectiveness of the bulb and decide when to change it. 💡 A committee to write policies and procedures for changing the bulb. 💡 A consortium to provide widespread and remote access to the light. 💡 A committee to manage the consortium. 💡 A consortium of consortia to share information and help each one be more effective. 💡 Well, you get the idea! 💡

If you want to read a serious article about the complexity of managing electronic resources, go to **Ellen Finnie Duranceau's** excellent article, "Beyond Print: Revisioning Serials Acquisitions for the Digital Age." *The Serials Librarian* 33 (1/2): 83-106, 1998, which is based on her experience at MIT. 🐼

International Dateline from page 72

was that the traditional distribution chain in serials publishing had had the effect of keeping publishers, agents, libraries and readers/authors in isolation from each other. The processes of evaluating and deploying electronic journals requires all parties in the chain to have a much greater understanding of the other environments. To date this has not happened, and it was clear from the meeting that this was to the overall detriment of the level of service being provided to the ultimate user of the information, the reader, who also needed considerable support and training. The way forward in the corporate sector may be for individual industry sectors to start to develop some generic guidelines for licensing agreements, along the lines of the pharmaceutical industry, but there are also issues here of resourcing these initiatives.

If nothing else, publishers left the meeting recognising that there was much still to be done, librarians were recognising that everyone else had the same problems, and subscription agents were working out how to take advantage of the situation. 🐼

On the Road from page 82

we New Englander's say when we see an alligator on the golf course.) We are used to finding cows, moose, deer, foxes, bears, and squirrels, but I have never run into an alligator!

I probably won't see another alligator this year, especially since we've already seen snow. But, I do look forward to next year's conference and a reunion with the "ATG" Alligator that I met this year on the seventh hole. 🐼

Adventures in Librarianship from page 83

"Yes I know. It's out of stock with the ven ..."

"Atlas of the Birds of Peru."

"Yeah, it's out ..."

"Not in Spanish, in English."

"The vendor doesn't have it."

"Yes. We don't have it either. That's why I ordered it."

Every word a land mine, so as I write this I pray you will understand, that I haven't done anything humiliating with the language, anything that future generations of Krafts will have to carry with them, their heads hung low. You measure your audience. You chose your words. But every act of communication presents a million possibilities, a million opportunities for misstep. If I have tripped, will you forgive me?

"Ned? This is Carlos. Are you still there?" 🐼

And They Were There from page 62

ing quarters in separate buildings. Among other things, they share staff development activities. With every gain there may be an expense, but for now they are satisfied with the way things are going.

Final panelist was **Ann Palkovich**, Deputy Director, Department of Instructional Improvement and Instructional Technology (also Anthropology Instructor), **George Mason University**. George Mason presents another model. They have created a triumvirate, which includes the computing center, library technology, and instructional technology services. All this is directed by the non-academic campus administrator for information technology. Ann's speech was very positive and energetic. She feels that the merger has eliminated redundant services and brought about better communication. At this time, she also feels that the model is working well and the departments are meeting their goal of providing as much information as possible to as many as possible as quickly as possible. 🐼

Innovations from page 74

nect the screen and hold it in portrait view as a lightweight reader?

Initially the novelty will appeal to those who are gadget oriented. It will take a year or two to amass a sufficiently large number of titles to attract readers. The standards

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issues that will enable any book to be read on any machine once you've bought it also need to be resolved. For the readers to go mainstream, however, they will need to deliver some increased level of functionality that enables us to more easily manage the rapidly growing amounts of information in our lives. 🐼

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