Letters to the Editor:

Send letters to <strauchk@cofc.edu>, phone or fax 843-723-3536, or snail mail: Against the Grain, MSC 98, The Citadel, Charleston, SC 29409. You can also send a letter to the editor from the ATG Homepage at <http://www.against-the-grain.com>.

Dear Editor:

Of course Professor Rick Heldrich (see ATG, September 1998, p.6) is right: there is a very real tension between the hope that what we transfer off-campus will not be needed and the belief that everything in the library’s collections is vitally important to some researcher somewhere. After all, we do keep acquiring material! Selecting material for an off-site shelving facility reveals the tension among several conflicting imperatives: collecting material we believe will be useful, preserving that material, and taking advantage of an economic model for highly efficient shelving and retrieval.

Thanks for passing this on.

Sincerely,
Margaret K. Powell
(Librarian for Literature in English and Commonwealth Studies, Sterling Memorial Library, Yale University)
<marginet.powell@yale.edu>

Dear Editor:

As my head was spinning from reviewing RFP responses and compiling references regarding OhioLINK’s proposed statewide approval plan, I grabbed ATG to go to the porch for a break and began reading for the third time.

The “Group Therapy—Prepaying Rush Orders” column (June, 1998, p.80) caught my attention and (after reading responses from YBP and BNA) I reflected on our experience.

Pardon me if I share.

After three years of struggle, we finally got credit cards this year. They offer the simplest solution to taking advantage of Amazon.com or Barnes & Noble. What a simple yet satisfying solution. Of course, a major impetus in my push for cards had been foreign orders—where we buy a $5 book abroad and pay $10 to $20 bank charges to handle the transaction. The classic case was the Australian electronic periodical Geek Girl. We had never been able to obtain it so it became an early priority for use of the card. Except we learned that, under some strange arrangement, they could only accept MasterCard or Visa from Australia. In the end, they ended up accepting a US check, probably to stop being bothered further. But, while it didn’t accomplish the ultimate challenge of Geek Girl, it has greatly simplified life and is the best possible answer to prepaying rush orders (and most foreign orders).

K. Mulliner
(Collection Development Coordinator & Asst. to Dean, “Owner” CORMOSEA & cap-sea Electronic Mailing Lists, Ohio University Libraries, Athens, OH)
<mulliner@ohiou.edu>

From your (swamped) Editor:

After a relatively relaxing summer, the fall has begun with a vengeance! First there were the hurricanes. We watch them closely, with fingers crossed, hanging on every TV broadcast or Internet StormWatch report. Then, enter the architects. You see, we are building a new library in Charleston, to break ground hopefully on 1 January 2000, so architects and building consultants, etc., etc., want to know what our space requirements are. And they want to know fast. Then there came another hurricane that shut down the library for a few days — just waiting. Hugo, you see, has taught us a lesson. We are now more respectful of hurricanes.

In the meantime, we all plugged away to bring you ATG! I am amazed at the cooperation and awesome help that I get in putting every single issue together. This magazine is produced by all of you. All I do is put it together. In this issue (the Charleston Conference issue), we have features dealing with commerce over the Internet. Surveys that Janet Flowers and I did over ACQNET convinced us that there was a lot going on out there, despite lack of profits. Kent Mulliner has written the lead article, and we have articles from Judy Luther, Janet Flowers, and James Williams. Plus — we have plenty of great columns — from Reba Leiding, Celia Wagner, Amy Capen, Eleanor Cook, Françoise Crowell, Joyce Ogburn, Sever Bordéau, Rosann Bazirjian, Lloyd Rich, Lolly Gasaway ... and I could go on and on. But why don’t you peek inside and see for yourself!

In this issue, we have given you profiles of the people who have made the Charleston Conference possible — Judy Webster, Barbara Dean, Heather Miller, and Robin Lent. These are just some of the many people who make this Conference run. My thanks go out to each and every one of you!

Yr. Ed. ©

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