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If Rumors Were Horses

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Reference eBooks: Does an eBook On The Screen Beat One On The Shelf?

by Frances C. Wilkinson (Phone: 505-277-4241; Fax: 505-277-7196) <wilkins@unm.edu>

and Linda K. Lewis (Phone 505-277-7828; Fax 505-277-4446) <llewis@unm.edu>

In reference publishing the first electronic resources were journal indexes. Now reference books such as handbooks, dictionaries and encyclopedias are widely available electronically with value-added features and acquisition options not available in their print counterparts. Electronic versions of reference eBooks are not limited to just text. They may present information in multiple media formats. For example, the text about a type of bird may be accompanied by video depicting the bird in flight and audio featuring its song. Publishers are developing a variety of ways to acquire these materials: they can be purchased individually or in a package or they can be leased as individual titles or a package of titles. Packages of titles may remain the same or change over time with new titles being added and others being removed. Many library users have rarely or never used print reference resources. Increasingly, they expect all reference materials, including reference books, to be online.

This article explores the rapidly changing world of reference books — the ways that electronic reference books are being selected, purchased, and budgeted. It further asks: once these electronic reference materials are acquired, how do your patrons and librarians react to them? How do libraries promote these resources? To address these issues the authors conducted an interview-style “joint discussion” among seven librarians from five universities: The University of Alabama, the University of California at Los Angeles, Colorado State University, the University of New Mexico, and the Ohio University. All but Alaska are Association of Research Libraries members. Although all five libraries are members of multiple consortia, three — Alaska, California, and Ohio — are members of consortia that provide extensive collections of electronic reference materials to their members. All answers address system-wide reference collections for the reporting University except for UCLA’s answers that describe only the collections at its Charles E. Young Research Library, covering primarily undergraduate research collections in humanities, social sciences, and education.

1) What electronic reference sources does your library currently have? How long have you had them?

Christina E. (‘Trina’) Carter, Head of Reference Services, Consortium Library, University of Alaska, Anchorage: “The University of Alaska Anchorage Consortium Library subscribes to a varied group of electronic reference resources continued on page 18

If Rumors Were Horses

Another summer. Lots happening.

First, Hurricane Katrina. The news from New Orleans, Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi is not good. I hope that it is not as bad as everyone is saying. To all our friends in libraries out there, our thoughts and prayers are with you.

A little human interest story about two of our own Charleston Conference attendees who lived through Hurricane Katrina and can tell us firsthand about it. Susanna Powers <powersad@blessing@yahoocom> and her husband Johnny Powers stayed in New Orleans. Susanna spent five grueling days in the Superdome while Johnny stayed with their home to try to protect it. As matters got worse, Susanna came to believe that Johnny had perished in the storm and flooding. She wrote her husband’s obituary. But! Johnny is alive and they are now both together at Susanna’s house in Ocala, Florida. I talked to them both on the telephone. New Orleans was terrible, they say, but much of the information being distributed by the media is wrong. Susanna just got her 25 year plaque from Tulane where she is Serials & Electronic Resources Librarian. Johnny is retired from the University of New Orleans. Susanna also saw Bob Bledsoe, retired acquisitions librarian at Tulane, at the Superdome and reports that he is fine under the circumstances. Hooyah!! And maybe they will be in Charleston?! We’ll have to celebrate!

Philip Blackwell, Chairman, Blackwell Limited, has announced the appointment of Gary Rautenstrauch as CEO Blackwell’s Book Services, effective immediately. Rautenstrauch’s proven track record in distribution and system delivery will help the company accelerate the delivery of service improvements following the implementation of its new order management and distribution system. Rautenstrauch will be based at Blackwell’s Book Services headquarters continued on page 8

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ters in Lake Oswego OR, and will report to
the Blackwell board in Oxford. This appointment sig-
nifies a change to Blackwell's book services
distribution and sales operations. There will be no
changes to the current Blackwell's Book Services
management team, and Daniel Halloran will remain
as president. Said Halloran, "I look forward to this
next phase of my career. I have a long-standing re-
spect and admiration for the staff of Blackwell's and
the 126-year Blackwell tradition. Gary
Rautenstrauch is an outstanding addition to the
company and I welcome him. The new structure gives
me an opportunity to do more of the thing I've loved
best over my 37 years in the industry — working
with the customer." You will all remember the very
capable Gary Rautenstrauch who is not new to us.
He served in a number of executive positions at Baker &
Taylor (B&T), most recently as president and
CEO from 2001 to 2003. In that role he oversaw in-
stitutional and retail distributor operations, including
sales and distribution. www.blackwell.com

Great news! Stefanie DuBose <sdboses@j
mar.unc.edu> announced the appointment of
Acquisitions, Academic Library Services,
Services, East Carolina University) and guest editor of
the fabulously popular June 2005 issue of ATG on
collections and development writes that her husband
Jon is in the U.S. and is expected in
Greenville, NC shortly. Pretty wonderfu.

Deanna Astle is valiantly battling endometrial cancer.
Her pain is under control and her doctor is treating her.
She has stabilized and things are looking better.
Deanna is hopeful that she will be able to come to
Charleston in November. Our prayers and good
thoughts are with her.

The awesome Heather Miller <hml1er@uxmail.albany.edu> sends word that Katherin L.
Latal was appointed Head of the Acquisitions Ser-
dvices Department at the State University of New
York at Albany, effective June 2, 2005. Ms. Latal
holds M.L.S. and B.A. degrees from SUNY Albany
and has served the department in several capacities
since 1986, and has been Acting Head. Previously
she worked as a cataloging assistant at Russell Sage
College, Troy, New York. Ms. Latal brings consider-
able experience in acquisitions work as well as ex-
censive library, university, and professional service
to this position.

Some pretty great news! Robert S. Martin, who
recently completed his fourth year term as Director
of the Institute of Museum and Library Services
(IMLS) in Washington, D.C., will join OCLC as
Special Advisor to the President for Cultural Heri-
tage Institutions. Dr. Martin will consult for OCLC
on special assignments beginning August 1. "I have
followed the work of OCLC closely over the past
four years, and I am optimistic that I can help OCLC
extend the value of its services to even more cultural
college senior defenseman, has signed a contract
with the Tulsa Oilers of the Central Hockey
League. Grammy graduated from Connecticut College
with a double major in Economics and History and was
a Dean's Honor Student. He is going to try out for the
Carolina Mudcats in October as well. We may have
him in Charleston again after all. Congratulations to
Don and his family!"

The always on the ball Scott Elliot <scott.elliot@ lexinsxis.com> sends word of the death of his pre-
decessor, Don Fitch. May he rest in peace.

Jan Velterop has taken the newly created posi-
tion of Director of Open Access at Springer. In
July 2004 Springer launched "Springer Open
Choice" a pioneering project which provides an ad-
ditional publication option to the traditional sub-
scription model. Authors can choose to make their articles
freely available worldwide on the Internet, for a fee of
$7,500.00 a year. Springer is now further develop-
ing the project with the launch of the first com-
ponent of the Open Access concept which is sup-
ported by a section of the scientific community.
Velterop is one of the most prominent figures of the
Open Access movement. He will be joining the com-
pany from BioMedCentral, an established Open
Access biomedical research publisher, where he was
Publishing Director. Dirk Haan, Springer's CEO, com-
ments: "The appointment of Jan Velterop cre-
ates an internal champion for this second component of
our publishing policy, making sure Open Access
gets the required attention both internally and exter-
nally." Adds Velterop: "I am firmly convinced that
Open Access publishing represents a powerful way
to meet the needs of many authors and readers. It there-
fore fits in ideally with Springer's growth strategy.

BioOne, a nonprofit online aggregator of schol-
ary journals in the biosciences, has appointed Su-
san Skomol as Executive Director and Chief Op-
erating Officer, starting in mid-October. Dr. Skomol
has been a member of the American Anthro-
pological Association since 1991, most recently,
since 2000, as Director of Publications and the
leader of the Association's transition from print to
electronic publishing. She earned a Ph.D. from the
University of California at Los Angeles and is a former Ad-
djet Professor at the University of Maryland, Uni-
versity College. She succeeds Heather Joseph,
BioOne's founding President, who assumed the po-
sition of Executive Director of SPARC (Scholarly
Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition) in
July. www.carl.org/sparc/announcements/082205.html

Amazon.com has announced Amazon Shorts —
a new way for customers to enjoy their favorite au-
thors and simple the work of new authors through
exclusive short-form literature, digitally delivered for
49 cents each. With Amazon Shorts, Amazon.com
aims to revive short-form literature by making it easy
for authors to publish — and for readers to find,
discover, and buy — single, short-form works. From
alternate endings to popular books, to personal mem-
ors, to classic short stories, Amazon Shorts span a
wide range of genres and formats. Writers such as
Ann Beattie, James Lee Burke, Harry S. Dent,
Audrey Niffenegger, and Danielle Steel are among
the authors who have already provided exclusive con-
tent for Amazon Shorts, and the segment will con-
tinue to grow. A departure from what publishing eco-
nomics currently support, Amazon Shorts enables
authors to efficiently offer single short-form works
(2,000 to 10,000 words) to a broad customer base.
Through this new, digital format, authors can sell their
works in an entirely new way, as well as leverage
this format to test new story ideas with readers and
publish short pieces in between books.
Amazon Shorts is its own store at Amazon.com. The
shorts are fully integrated into the Amazon Website,
making them searchable and providing all of the customer
tests, reviews and recommendations that Amazon.com
users have come to expect. Amazon Shorts are copyrighted works available
for purchase and cost 49 cents each. However, in order to preserve
a frictionless viewing experience, no digital rights
management software is needed to download and read
Amazon Shorts. Customers who purchase Amazon
Shorts will have the option of downloading the piece
View now. Takes customers to a Web page to read or
print out the Amazon Short. Download: Initiates the
download of a PDF file. E-mail: Sends the entire
Amazon Short in a plain-text message to the spec-
ified e-mail address. Amazon Shorts will also be
stored permanently in customers' Digital Lockers,
and customers are welcome to print out hard copies
of purchased Amazon Shorts from any of these for-

And speaking of Amazon, did you see
InfoToday's NewsBreaks dated August 8, 2005?
Entitled "OCLC and Amazon: A Connection Revealed,"
the story describes OCLC's role in the development
of the new functionality and depth of Amazon's book
title database given the addition of OCLC WorldCat
text content. The discovery of relatively unique titles held
by a few libraries worldwide is possible. And there are
new possibilities for Print on Demand and loca-
tion of Out of Print titles. Read more at www.
infotoday.com/newsbreaks/080805.html

The above builds on the book search features of
A9.com, the subsidiary of Amazon.com that was
launched in 2003. Speaking of A9.com, they have
just launched "A9.com Maps", a new service that
shows users an interactive map and corresponding
street level images in a single interface. A9's
BlackView™ technology brings traditional maps to
life by combining driving directions and other con-
venient mapping tools with street-level images of
millions of places and their surroundings.
a9.com/mediamedia/index.jsp?current=

And speaking of WorldCat About 10,000
research institutions contribute to articles from the top
474 Chilean scientific and technical journals are now
available in WorldCat. Scientists, researchers, stu-
dents, and other users can access these records and
the corresponding article text at no additional cost
via WorldCat on the OCLC FirstSearch service.
The articles are in English, Portuguese, and Spanish
and are published in the Scientific Electronic Li-
brary Online Chile. SciELO Chile is an electronic
library of scientific journals from Chile, using the
open access model, based on the platform developed
by BIREME/FAPESP. www.elsevier.org/
www.scielo/ 
www.nelc.org/worldcat/default.htm
www.scielo.cl/ctielo.php?script=sci_someted
amp;lng=en&nym=iso>

And more from OCLC Abstracts, August 29,
2005 (Vol. 8, Issue 35). Will Google Print and
keyword searching eliminate the need for LC cata-
logging and classification? According to Thomas
Mann, Reference Librarian at the Main Reading
Room of the Library of Congress, the answer is no.
The programs limitations make cataloging and clas-
sification even more important to researchers. Mann
says that Google Print and keyword search mecha-
nism, backed by the display of results in relevance
ranked order, are designed for quick, not in-depth,
information seeking rather than scholarship. They do
not provide scholars with the structured menus of
research options needed for overview perspectives
of the book literature on their topics. Searching by
keywords is not the same as searching by conceptual
categories. Keyword searching does not map the tax-
onomies that alert researchers to unanticipated aspects
of their subjects. It fails to retrieve literature that uses
keywords other than those specified by the researcher,
he says, missing not only synonyms and variant
phrases but also relevant works in foreign languages.
Cataloging and classification do provide the recog-
nitiveness mechanism critical to scholarship for sys-
temic literature retrieval in book collections.
www.guild2910.org/searching.html

Dlib magazine has just turned ten years old. See
the latest issue (July/August 2005) which has much
more worth reading and of special interest — Where Do
We Go From Here? The Next Decade for Digital
Libraries by the incredible Clifford Lynch.
dlib.org/dlib

Was poking around on the University of Cali-
fornia Press Website and located news of the sum-
continued on page 10

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The incredible Lynne Brindley, Chief Executive of the British Library has accepted a permanent contract from the Board of the British Library, following her successful five year tenure as Chief Executive. The announcement was made to staff by Lord Eatwell, Chairman of the British Library Board. The offer was made with the unanimous agreement of the Board and supported by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport. Lynne Brindley joined the Library on 1 July 2000, being both the first library information professional and woman to hold the position of Chief Executive.

ProQuest Information and Learning has expanded its newspaper digitization program to include small town and community newspaper archives. The new expanded program brings state-of-the-art preservation and access to smaller, more specialized collections. ProQuest launched its new expanded service with the digitization of the Zeeland Record, the tiny weekly that has served its Western Michigan community since the 1890s, when the town became a destination for Dutch settlers in the state. The Howard Miller Library in Zeeland contracted ProQuest to digitize its 43 rolls of microfilm issues of The Record after receiving a financial gift from the estate of a board member. “This is an important step in the evolution of our digital newspaper program,” said the ham-zowie Rod Gauvin, ProQuest vice president. ProQuest’s small newspaper digitization program is nearly identical to the digitization program used for major national newspapers, such as The New York Times. Because small newspapers have fewer articles per page, article-level searching is not required. Instead ProQuest digitizes to the page level, making the service more affordable for small communities. Also, each ProQuest project — large or small — is cross-searchable within the larger database. For example, The Zeeland Record can be searched in conjunction with The New York Times or Chicago Tribune, providing researchers with the “local angle” in the context of the larger, national story.

The American Chemical Society and ScholarOne, Inc., provider of Web-based workflow management solutions for scholarly publishers are pleased to announce that the Publications Division of the American Chemical Society has chosen ScholarOne Manuscript Central to expand and enhance its online peer review and manuscript management capabilities. Implementation of the new system, which will be called ACS Manuscript Plus Environment Powered by ScholarOne Manuscript Central, is scheduled to commence in Autumn 2005. ACS Publications currently publishes 33 leading publications in the chemical and related sciences, including the Journal of the American Chemical Society, Chemical & Engineering News, and Accounts of Chemical Research. In 2006, ACS will introduce ACS Chemical Biology, a new publication at the interface of biology and chemistry.

Haight's Crossing Communications, Inc., has sold its Chelsea House business effective August 9, 2005, to Facts on File, Inc. The terms of the deal were not disclosed. Chelsea House will be repositioned as a discontinued operation beginning in the third quarter ended September 30, 2005.

Triumph Learning, a publisher of supplementary educational texts and software and a Haight's Crossing Communications company, has named Marie Spina Vice President and Editorial Director. Spina reporting to Bill Scroggie, Triumph Learning's Publisher. Triumph Learning, formerly known as Educational Design, Inc., has a 40-year track record of publishing high-quality K-12 supplemental materials. Triumph Learning is the largest publisher of test preparation materials for state tests, and develops and distributes the renowned Coach™ series for test programs in 25 states as well as for the three major nationally normed tests. www.triumphlearning.com. www.haightsborrow.com/dyn/press_cfm

According to PeerScout's Library Blog — http://blog.peer.scout.com (May 31, 2005) — A digital portal to collections of the National Library of China: http://www.nlc.gov.cn/ was open on May 29, providing online search and access to digitized resources of the library. As the latest public service platform launched by the library, the D-portal combines 31 Chinese-language data banks, 77 foreign language data banks, and 6,000-odd Chinese and foreign languages, as well as special resources including local records, Dunhuang documents, periodicals of the Republic of China (1912-1949) and doctoral dissertation and master's thesis, all purchased or established by the national library (5/30/2004 4:05:37 AM).

Was talking to the astute Peter Givler — pgivler@aau.net — the other day. Be sure and read his Issues in Vendor/Library Relations, this issue, p. 72. It’s, of course, about Google and Google Print. And we hope to have a regular column from Peter throughout the year!

And speaking of the Google Print for Libraries program, there has been a lot of press lately about this and Google seems to be slowing their digitization project at least for books published since 1923 somewhat. See Barbara Quint’s Newsbreaks of Aug 15, 2005 — “Google Slows Library Project to Accommodate Publishers” by Barbara Quint, www.infotoday.com/newsbreaks/081505_l_newsbreak_print.google.com/googleprint/publisher_library.html

Eight academic libraries in Hong Kong will launch a 9-million-volume resource-sharing network utilizing Innovative's INN-Reach solution. Scheduled for start-up in September, the new Hong Kong Academic Library Link (HKALL) will leverage the success of a pilot project undertaken by City University of Hong Kong, continued on page 12

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Lingnan University, and the University of Hong Kong. During the pilot, participating library staff found that patron usage of the service greatly exceeded that of the previous interlibrary loan (ILL) option, while items were delivered more quickly at a much lower cost. The expanded HKALL system will also include the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, and Hong Kong University of Science and Technology. “The new INN-Reach system was found to be much cheaper than operating a traditional ILL system. Items were 42% less expensive to lend and 45% less expensive to borrow,” says Tony Ferguson, Library Director at University of Hong Kong. “Turnaround was also faster with 95% of patron requests met within two working days, compared with only 9% of ILL requests.” During the initial project, over 6,700 items were requested and delivered with a user satisfaction rate of 80%.” The eight Hong Kong universities applied successfully for funding from Hong Kong’s University Grants Committee (UGC) to expand the project beyond the first three libraries. HKALL will be the first INN-Reach site in Asia. www.hl.com/

Speaking of the great Tony Ferguson, we will miss him in Charleston this year (I know, he said he would be here, but now he has delayed his appearance by another year ...). Still, be sure and read his Back Talk on Aphorisms, this issue, p.94. Things Are Seldom What They Seem. An Aphorism.

From Edupage 24 August, 2005 — Google has announced a free service called Google Talk that lets email account holders talk to each other using a PC, microphone, and speakers and provides instant messaging capability. Google reportedly plans to make the service compatible with other companies’ services, basing it on an open standard, which would allow users to talk to people on competing systems. Users will not be able to make calls to landlines or mobile phones, however. The new service does not carry advertising, but Google hopes it will encourage people to sign up for the Gmail service, which does. BBC, 24 August 2005. news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/business/4179322.stm www.edupage.org/839

Bowker has recently released a variety of new resources to assist library professionals with the operational changes necessary to transition to the new ISBN-13 standard that takes effect in 16 months. The International Standard Book Number (ISBN) is the unique number that marks any book published in the world and enables that book, with its particular edition and binding, to be easily tracked by libraries, booksellers and even consumers. In order to accommodate the growing number of books being published each year, the International ISBN Agency recently decided to convert from a 10-digit format to 13-digit ISBNs, effective January 1, 2007. To ease that transition for libraries, Bowker has unveiled a new Website (www.bowkersupport.com/ isbn13/) that features a series of free resources and convenient links to other useful sites. These resources include a helpful Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) fact sheet, a “10-to-13 digit ISBN” conversion tool, guidelines for the implementation of ISBN-13 in any library setting, and various tips regarding how to make the transition as seamless as possible. In addition, Bowker today announced that its flagship Websites, BooksInPrint.com and GlobalBooksInPrint.com, now fully support ISBN-13 searching by library professionals. Users of either site can search for specific titles by both the new ISBN-13 and the old 10-digit ISBN, either with or without hyphens. The new ISBN-13 will now automatically appear on the full description page for every title with a 10-digit ISBN. www.Bowker.com — JISC — the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), the UK government body that supports higher education by providing strategic guidance, advice, and opportunities to use Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to support education and research, has concluded an agreement for Elsevier’s Scopus A&I database of research information. More than 70 universities and colleges have already taken advantage of the deal within just weeks of the agreement being announced. JISC works with higher education to provide a ubiquitous and information environment so that users can enjoy world-class technologies in their work and study. JISC negotiates with publishers and information systems vendors on behalf of the academic community in the UK. JISC runs rigorous evaluations before deciding to license an online resource in its portfolio of collections and has been assessing Scopus since its launch in November 2004. Lorraine Estelle, Collections Team Manager at the JISC explains that the agreement with Scopus provides British universities with “the opportunity to take advantage of a major new resource discovery tool at the terms and conditions set out by the JISC Model License.” The Joint Information Systems Committee is a joint committee of the UK further and higher education funding bodies, and is responsible for supporting the innovative use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning, teaching, and research. It is best known for providing the JANET network, a range of support, content and advisory services, and a portfolio of high-quality resources. www.jisc.ac.uk www.info.scopus.com

Building upon a decade of innovation, the new SciFinder 2006 advances its reputation as an essential information tool and part of the process of chemical and pharmaceutical research. For the first time, scientists exploring the CAS Registry of 26 million organic and inorganic chemical substances can retrieve “similar substances” to foster new ideas and directions in drug discovery and other fields of scientific inquiry. “Similarity Searching” is only one of several new features adding new power and depth to SciFinder this year. CAS, a division of the American Chemical Society, launched SciFinder 2006 and SciFinder Scholar 2006 at the American Chemical Society meeting in Washington, D.C. in August, 2005. I can’t help myself. Since my daughter is a chemistry major and in her third week of medical school, Chemistry has taken on a new meaning for me. Nobel Laureate, Dr. K. Barry Sharpless, W.M. Keck Professor of Chemistry at the Scripps Research Institute, shared his reflections regarding the significance of SciFinder: “I am a big user and don’t see how any researcher could hope to excel without daily, round-the-clock access. In the old days, you could be forgiven for not knowing about a certain paper, but now there is no excuse.” www.cas.org/

The Esther J. Piercy Award Jury is seeking nominations for the Esther J. Piercy Award which was established by the Resources and Technical Services Division of the American Library Association in 1968 in memory of Esther J. Piercy, editor of Journal of Cataloging and Classification from 1959 to 1956 and of Library Resources & Technical Services from 1957 to 1967. The award consists of a $1,500 grant donated by Yankee Book Peddler, Inc., and a citation presented at the membership meeting of the Association during the ALA Annual Conference. This award is given to recognize the contributions to those areas of librarianship included in library collections and technical services by a librarian with not more than ten years of professional experience who has shown outstanding promise for continuing contribution and leadership. For more information including submission procedures and criteria, contact Larry Heiman, Chair of Esther J. Piercy Award

continued on page 14

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Accurate pricing

Rumors from page 12

Jury at <larry.heiman@yale.edu>. The deadline for nominations is December 1, 2005.

CrossRef, the reference-linking service for scholarly and professional content, has announced the launch of a freely available OpenURL resolver to facilitate navigation to the 17+ million items now registered in CrossRef. The resolver, described at http://www.crossref.org/openurl allows users to enter an OpenURL as one way to be directed to publications from the hundreds of publishers and societies that participate in CrossRef by registering Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs) for their content. CrossRef's OpenURL resolver is offered at no charge for individual use, and thus functions as a DOI look-up resource for the public. It is fully compliant with the recently approved NISO Z39.88- 2004 standard entitled OpenURL Framework for Context-Sensitive Services. The CrossRef resolver accepts URLs structured according to the 0.1 or 1.0 NISO specifications, as well as some common deviations, and it supports the features outlined in the San Antonio Profile (SAP) #1 community profile, including in-line, by-value, and by-reference URLs. CrossRef has also long made available a free text-based interface for individual DOI queries, available at http://www.crossref.org/guestquery/. CrossRef is an independent membership association, founded and directed by publishers. It is to improve access to published scholarship through collaborative technologies. CrossRef operates a cross-publisher citation linking system, and is an official DOI (Digital Object Identifier) registration agency. The OpenURL is a mechanism for transporting metadata and identifiers describing a publication, for the purpose of context-sensitive linking. For more information on the OpenURL, see http://library.caltech.edu/openurl and http://www.niso.org/standards/standard_detail.cfm?std_id=783. Additional information is available at http://www.crossref.org.

Dana Sally has left UNC-Greensboro where he was Associate Director and is now the new Dean of Libraries at University of West Florida. And, guess what, his first day was a hurricane evacuation day so he couldn’t be more unhappy with his decision.

And Beth Bernhardt has been a huge, enormous, gigantic help with the program of the 2005 Charleston Conference! Beth’s daughter, Anna, who loves to play volleyball (just like my daughter did at her age) but she is sidelined with a torn ACL — but not for long I’ll bet!!!

Heard from Mitchell Davis of BookSurge <mitchell@booksurge.com>. BookSurge was acquired by Amazon.com in April, 2005 and Mitchell is re-locating to corporate headquarters in Seattle. The plan, however, is to keep BookSurge in good old Charleston. They are doubling staffing at that facility. I didn’t get to see Mitchell in Chicago but I understand that he was there. Watch for an interview coming soon! www.booksurge.com

Read about Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Inc., et al., Petitioners v. Grokster, Ltd., et al., the recently decided Supreme Court file-sharing case and the distribution of peer-to-peer (P2P) systems, this issue, p.62.

Had a grand visit with the awesome John Laraway <John.Laraway@Blackwell.com> the other day. John was on his way down to Florida and hoping to avoid bad weather. Lots of good stuff is happening with Collection Manager.

And had yet another delightful visit with Danny Overstreet of OCLC/netlibrary. Did you know he used to work for IDS as well as SilverPlatter?

Speaking of which, Danny and I were talking about the growing popularity of Audiobooks and this news caught my eye: The Record Books, I.C., the premier publisher of unabridged audiobooks since 1979 and a Hights Cross Communications company, we’ve heard that name continued on page 16

Against the Grain / September 2005

<http://www.against-the-grain.com>
WebWorthy has reviewed 338 Websites to date! Are you reading this intro? If so, we’d like to know if you find this column useful. Email the editor at “pnmrose@buffalo.edu” with your comments and any suggestions for improvement.

Websites are chosen for uniqueness, depth of information, functionality and ease of access. Sites are organized by broad subject area and are visited just prior to publication. Please let the editor know of any broken links. Comments and suggestions welcome to Pamela M. Rose, Health Sciences Library, University at Buffalo, 3435 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14214-3002; 716-829-3900 x129; <pnmrose@buffalo.edu>. Unless otherwise noted, Internet sites were also reviewed in Science’s NetWatch column. — PR

Herpetology
Did you know that constrictors (snakes who kill by encircling or pinning their prey) do not kill by suffocation? Rather they collapse the chest cavity so much that the heart shuts down, which is about twice as fast as suffocation — luckily for the victim! Also, contrary to popular misconception, snakes are not slimy at all, rather they are smooth, dry and often feel like silk-over-muscle. “Slimy” is a better description for amphibians, who spend much of their life in water and so have a nice, mucousy covering for protection. It’s all part of educating citizens about that which researchers know well. The Center for North American Herpetology, a non-profit foundation centered in Lawrence, Kansas, has worked since 1994 to promote education and conservation of amphibians, turtles, reptiles, crocodilians, and tuatars (fascinating animal — has a single row of teeth on the lower jaw that fits in between the double row on the upper, and third EYE on the top of its head, as do some other lizards!) CNAH serves as a data bank, provides financial support to further research, offers awards, and acts as a repository for quality photos that are offered for sale at modest cost. Although the Web site only links to other sites with basic descriptive information on the general classes of herps, it offers information on careers/jobs/graduate study, societies, taxonomy, directories of herpetologists, a pdf library of selected articles published in journals in the field, information on new species, conference listings, new publications, online collection links and links by taxonomy, current research initiatives, and hot news in the field. Well worth visiting! http://www.cnah.org/index.asp

Librarianship
The Informed Librarian, “professional reading for the information professional since January 2003, offers links to the table of contents of over 600 [as of this writing] library and information-related journals. The journal titles can be viewed either in a title or subject list. The newsletter offers a monthly compilation of 11+ featured articles, an informative “Guest Forum Article” on timely topics (May was on “How to Write Right”), and a featured book review with discounted purchase option. Readers can comment on the guest forum article and choose a printer-friendly format for many pages. Those articles available in full-text are either pdf, or move you to the publishers Website with varying options to view as pdf or html. All issues are archived, fully searchable, with saved search criteria for future use. Users can take advantage of a “free membership” with limited access. Subscriptions for individuals are $29/year, with bulk users and site license pricing available. Infosources Publishing publishes basic reference sources for lawyers, law librarians, legal researchers and information professionals. Arlene L. Eis, the editor of Infosources’ publications, is a professional librarian and former library director at the New York law firm of Cravath, Swaine & Moore, with many years of library experience. Note that the site does use low-key advertising (unobtrusive, no pop-ups). http://www.infosources.com

Research
Reading about it is one thing, but the average viewer can watch a program demonstrating minimally invasive and robotic surgery at The Research Channel, whose Web motto is “one bright idea after another.” Also billed as the “C-SPAN of scientific and medical research”, the 24 hour a day broadcasts aired over cable and satellite networks are archived and available for Internet viewing on demand. The shows are produced by over 25 universities, the NIH, and other sources. UVA and the U. of Washington have a number of programs, including medical programs that are linked to the U. of Washington’s miniMedical school. A visit to the Video Library archive allows viewers to browse by broad subject or access new releases. Watch a lecture on the value of poetry to society, see interviews with artists from painters and sculptors to writers, or a tutorial on applied geometry. Viewers can also call up a sample letter to send to their local cable or satellite network to ask that they carry the channel. — http://www.researchchannel.org

Rumors
from page 14

before, this issue, p.10) is offering U.S. libraries a new downloadable audiobook subscription service. The service is the result of Recorded Books’ strategic agreement last year with NetLibrary. According to David Berstein, Recorded Books President and CEO, “Recorded Books’ national library service has been presenting our new Downloadable Audiobooks service to our thousands of library customers. Their response has been overwhelmingly positive and customers are signing-on quickly. For several years now, libraries have seen growing demand for audiobooks in CD and cassette formats. Downloadable Audiobooks available through a library’s Website is the ‘next big idea’ in developing exciting new approaches to win and keep a new generation of library patrons.”

And speaking of new technology — Mark Anderson’s book has just come out. It is of interest on many levels because it’s about Shakespeare but also because of its use of new technology (ipod) and also because it’s by the fabulous John Riley Schatz had moved to Mt. Pleasant (see JTG, v.17, no.3, p.8) recently. Anyway, we recently had supper together at a great new barbeque restaurant in downtown Charleston (on King Street) that you all are going to love. Anyway, Bob’s company, Couts Library Services has announced a recent contract award with James Madison University, Harrisonburg, Virginia. Couts will provide JMU with monographs on approval, standing orders and some firm orders. Couts works closely with liaison librarians at JMU to strengthen subject profiles. Daille Petit, acquisitions/collections librarian stated that: “Following the RFP process Couts was appointed as one of two suppliers to JMU libraries. Working with new book vendors presents a great opportunity for us to implement new procedures.” www.coutsinfo.com/ I guess a lot of us are substituting electronic for print and that will be the subject of many talks at the Charleston Conference in November. Along those lines, H.W. Wilson has announced the latest addition to the Wilson Retrospective Collection of periodicals databases: Education Index Retrospective: 1925-1983. This is the space-saving online equivalent to 33 Education Index print annuals, with

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Little Red Herrings — Stop the Presses: Feet No Longer Needed; Hands Next to Go

by Mark Y. Herring (Dean of Library Services, Dacus Library, Winthrop University) <herringm@winthrop.edu>

A

m I the only one? Am I the only one who finds the spate of recent articles about the "digital tsunami" a bit odd and unquestionably professionally suicidal? In many ways, to listen to our colleagues talk about how digitization is fast replacing libraries is like the young man who, after being found guilty of murdering his parents, threw himself on the mercy of the court because he was an orphan. Keep this up and we'll all be working for Microsoft, or not at all.

Take for example the article that appeared in the 1 July issue of the Chronicle of Higher Education, Fred Heath, provost of the University of Texas, gleefully talks about how undergraduates this fall will come back to an "information commons" rather than the 90,000-plus volumes the library used to have. Replacing UT-Austin's carping bun-heads will be "Internet-savvy" librarians! Notwithstanding his admission, Mr. Heath is not behind the ears either. "All of us are dealing with a reactive tension between our commitment to this great print collection and the digital tsunami that's bearing down on us," he says. I don't know if the Austin-head got to Mr. Heath, but I have not felt that digital tsunami, unless of course he means to conjure the colossal damage tsamis wreak in their wake.

Mr. Heath goes on to inform us that, "The challenge is to re-engineer our space to be able to move into this suddenly, formidably huge digital universe."

I don't mean to pick on Mr. Heath but that is precisely not the challenge. The challenge is the same as it has always been: to deliver first-rate library service regardless of the medium. The trouble is, we've been down this road before. Anytime we make the medium, the format, more important than the information, the knowledge, we lose sight of what library service is all about. Years ago, when I first entered this profession, libraries faced the same woebegone future: microforms would turn every library into the size of a shoebox. No longer would we need library buildings because everyone would have his or her own library tucked under arm.

Here we are, twenty years later trying to figure out a way to close the book altogether on microforms.

When it becomes clear that the pitfalls of microforms were so formidable they would not be easily resolved, automation (in the form of catalogs) reared its hydra-head and promised to transform the library to a mere fragment of our ancestors' imaginations. Twenty years later, here we are adapting automation in various ways but certainly didn't replace libraries with it. When we came to understand automation not as panacea but as merely another tool (like microforms), we got somewhat serious about library service.

But we were only serious until public television appeared on the educational scene. Now surely here was a turning point. Surely public television would completely transform not just libraries but every facet of education from kindergarten to college. University campuses would be transformed overnight, making it possible to teach tens of thousands of students via television. College and university campuses would be closing all over the country. Twenty years later here we are trying to find out if public television can produce an unimbed show. In many ways, public television reminds us of that old saw: "Of all sad words of tongue or pen, the saddest are these: what might have been."

Are you able to discern a trend here? Mr. Heath may have forgotten that this country still maintains the most draconian copyright laws in the world, a point overlooked by Google's grand digitization project but one it is slowly coming to grips with. We are discovering that Google's grand project may turn out to be the equivalent of academic Web-pages, snippets of books that provide a clue but not more and so miss the Scylla of copyright while crashing on the Charybdis shoals of flamboyance. Just what we need: another reason to make sure the rising generation not only never loses its allergy to reading but will be confirmed in it.

Or perhaps Mr. Heath has forgotten about ecology. Are Texas students more abstemious about printing than those on the east coast? Here students hit the print key if the Web return is longer than three pages. Multiply that by 20,000 students just at one campus and you'll make a tree-hugger out of Rush Limbaugh.

Other reasons obtain. When CalPoly determined on a new library building it erected a $42 million conventional one. With the nation's largest concentration of engineers and computer geeks at their disposal and they couldn't come up with a paperless library. And what about all those failed, failing, or stumbling digitization outfits: netLibrary, Xanadu, Questa and others? Doesn't this tell us anything?

Or where are those digital support industries that should already be present? We still don't have an eBook reader that is worth the silicon it's printed on. So far my favorite is one that simulates a turning page and smells like leather. Of course, you still can't read it in the sunlight but who reads any more? Apparently not many at UT-Austin. Does this strike anyone as a potential problem in a rush to digital judgment day? When these objections are raised, they are generally brushed off as not something to worry about. It will all come out in the wash. Meanwhile, Mr. Gorbachev, tear down that library!

Oh, I know what you're thinking. Another Luddite, a freak, a man from Erewhon raving like a madman about computers and Big Brother, and all that radiation from monitors. Pat him on the head and he'll go away. Here's the point of what I'm saying: there is a place for electronic services in every library, especially when it comes to serial information. But in the same manner that all our other tools are not the library-in-itself, neither is digitization. It is not a rolling tsunami washing the library away in its wake, or a fast-moving freight train that we must either board or be run over, if I may mix metaphors. It is simply another tool that we must insinuate into libraries, not to replace them, but to make them what they have always been: the first, best source for information access. Like all would-be-contenders before now, make the Web-alone, or any of its constituent parts a library and you have a very poor, very inadequate ersatz.

I see this talk about the Web replacing or making libraries obsolete as silly as if some academic were to rush forward and say, "Here's a way to save money: let's digitize all our university athletic teams! We'll save on liability, can get rid of very costly athletic departments, allow every student to play and determine the outcome (your team always wins), dispense with paying coaches millions of dollars, no longer have to put up with off-the-field or court antics of some players, and help focus every incoming student's eyes on the very reason we send them to college in the first place: to get an education."

Even though such nonsense talk might get a hearing in some latte-corners of the world, it's just kaijus. Likewise is all this talk about digitization replacing libraries, or making them obsolete. It's like saying the invention of shoes has now made all feet unnecessary.