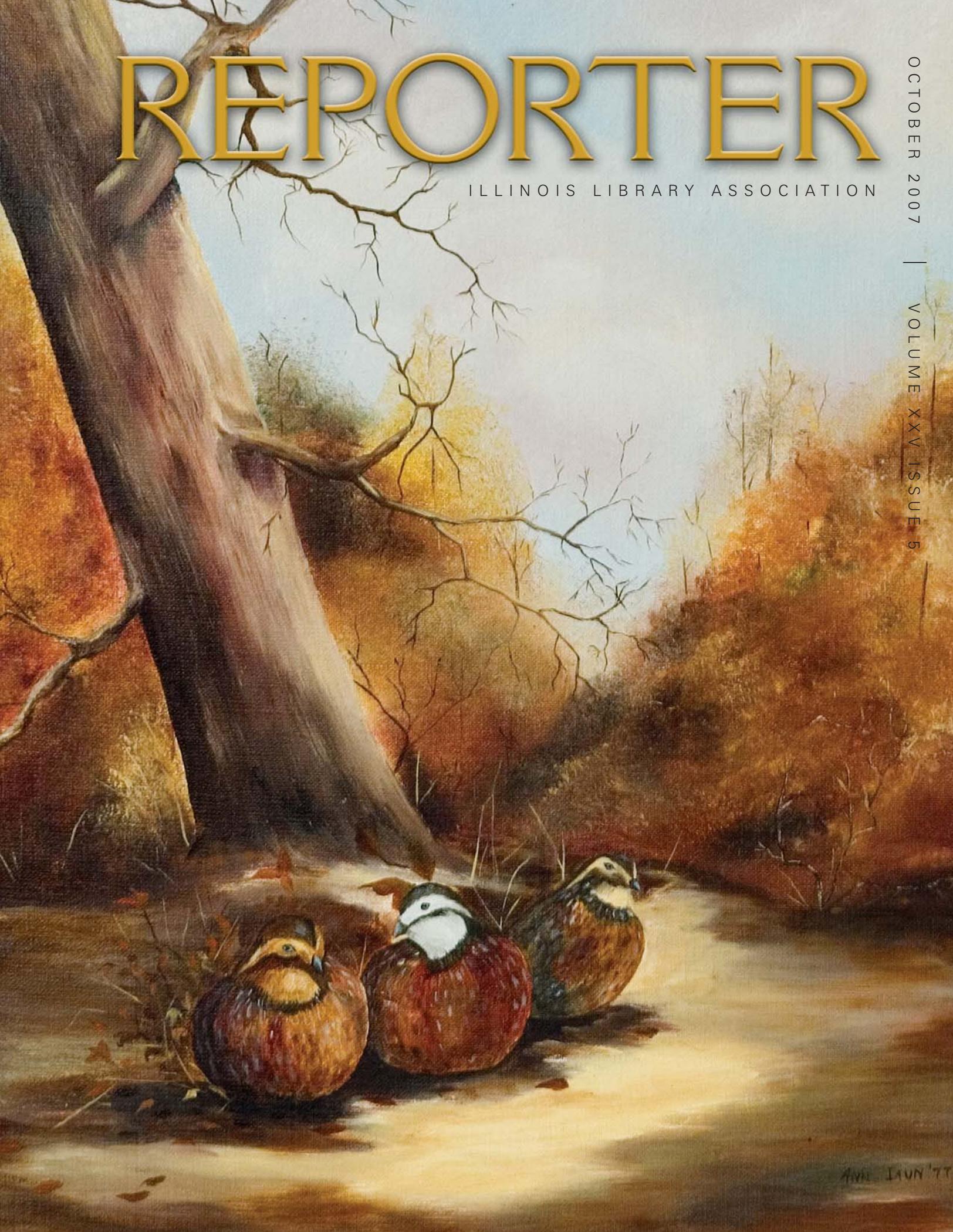


# REPORTER

ILLINOIS LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

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# The Illinois Library Association Reporter

is a forum for those who are improving and reinventing Illinois libraries with articles that seek to: explore new ideas and practices from all types of libraries and library systems; examine the challenges facing the profession; and inform the library community and its supporters with news and comment about important issues. The *ILA Reporter* is produced and circulated with the purpose of enhancing and supporting the value of libraries, which provide free and equal access to information. This access is essential for an open democratic society, an informed electorate, and the advancement of knowledge for all people.



## ON THE COVER

*Quail Refuge* (1977) at the Olney Public Library. The artist, Ann Clark Jaun (1939–), native of Olney, studied at Olney Community College and has enjoyed a forty-year career in nursing. She participated in several art seminars in central Illinois, including some at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and most recently studied painting in France and Italy with Margaret Evans. She has been a commercial artist in Illinois, California, and Mexico. She has resided in San Miguel de Allende, Mexico since 1995 and is known primarily as a portrait artist.

This year's *ILA Reporter* covers showcase the incredibly rich heritage of Illinois libraries photographed, inventoried electronically, and archived in "Art and Architecture in Illinois Libraries." (See April 2006 *ILA Reporter*, pp. 12–17.) The Illinois State Library, a division of the Office of Secretary of State, supported this project using funds provided by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) under the federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA). Principal investigators: Allen Lanham and Marlene Slough, Eastern Illinois University. Photo: Bev Cruse, Eastern Illinois University.

The Illinois Library Association is the voice for Illinois libraries and the millions who depend on them. It provides leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library services in Illinois and for the library community in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all. It is the eighth oldest library association in the world and the third largest state association in the United States, with members in academic, public, school, government, and special libraries. Its 2,900 members are primarily librarians and library staff, but also trustees, publishers, and other supporters.

The Illinois Library Association has three full-time staff members. It is governed by a sixteen-member executive board, made up of elected officers. The association employs the services of Kolkmeier Consulting for legislative advocacy. ILA is a 501(c) (3) charitable and educational organization.

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# Success in Diversity: How Three Illinois Libraries Embrace Multiculturalism

**F**rom targeted collection development, to partnering with community organizations, to training staff in diversity competencies, Illinois libraries are using creative and successful means to serve diverse groups. This article explores how an academic library, a special library, and a public library are making extraordinary strides in diversity. These libraries are providing access to quality information, materials, technology, programming, and facilities to a variety of communities.

## DIVERSITY AND AN ACADEMIC LIBRARY: THE COLLECTION IS CRUCIAL

Northwestern University is an established leader in serving African American students and scholars of Africa and its diaspora. My introduction to the university's wealth of resources began with Kathleen Bethel, the African American Studies Librarian at Northwestern, sharing her experiences as a student and librarian at Northwestern.

As a Northwestern student, Bethel used the university's Melville Herskovits' Library of African Studies which she says is perhaps one of the finest collections on sub-Saharan Africa. She says, "It was a librarian's dream collection. Any and every resource that I needed or wanted to see as a graduate student was right here. The only thing lacking was electronic full-text which is now available."

The Herskovits Collection of Africana is in the main library at Northwestern. The items she selects, on African American topics, complement the items in Herskovits. The contents overlap slightly. Both support the university's internationally renowned Program of African Studies (PAS). They also support the Department of African American Studies. Professor Melville Herskovits, who had previously founded Northwestern's anthropology department in 1938, founded the PAS in 1948. The year 2007 is a milestone for the Department of African American Studies; this is the first year it has doctoral level students. Currently there are only seven Ph.D. programs in African American Studies in the United States.

The Herskovits Collection of Africana was founded in 1954. Library resources include 285,000 volumes, 2,800 current serials, and 250 current newspapers. 15,000 books are written in 300 different African languages. The library also holds collections of photographs, maps, and other ephemera. It has online resources for the study of Africa.

A curator and three librarians to help with reference questions staff Herskovits. Bibliographic instruction is available for groups. Appointments may be made for research consultation.

Bethel is responsible for collecting material on African American life and culture for Northwestern's main library. She has attached invaluable links to her segment of the library's Web site. There are links to university-wide sites, links to other libraries' sites, and other gateways to material on African American studies.



Bethel's position was created in a very different fashion from the Herskovits positions. Bethel said, "Student protests in the 1960s and 1970s were the impetus for creation [of her position]." This was a pattern at universities throughout the country. Other diverse groups have followed suit in demanding representation in libraries' staff. For example, following demonstrations by Asian American students, Northwestern has established programs, departments, and research centers in that discipline. Eventually, a position for an East Asian Studies Librarian was created. Bethel observes that universities are responding to their students' demands.

With its vast and growing resources, and specialists such as Bethel, the Northwestern University Library is able to work with other university departments to attract and educate more and more students of African History and African American Studies.

## DIVERSITY: OUTREACH THROUGH A SPECIAL LIBRARY

The state of Illinois has the fifth largest immigrant population in the country. To support the work of libraries in serving their increasingly diverse communities, the Illinois State Library in Springfield has the proactive, productive Illinois Diversity Program (IDP). Vandella Brown, manager of the IDP, discussed the vast amount of programming, exhibits, and grant initiatives the state library provides to foster diversity in Illinois.

"The Illinois State Library Diversity Program models leadership in positioning our libraries to serve all citizens," Brown says. The IDP, a division of the Office of the Secretary of State and State Librarian, was created in 2003. Its purpose is "to assist the Illinois library community in developing cultural and minority diversity initiatives." Brown works with twelve advisors from diverse heritage, multi-type libraries and cultural organizations, who provide recommendations and evaluations for programming, grants, and resources. In addition, the program networks with more than one hundred Illinois librarians.

When the IDP was initially formed, the staff committee gave workshops in technology, such as the database EnCarta's Africana. The next program entailed working with WebJunction, an online forum for library staff, part of which is geared toward outreach to Spanish speakers. Currently, the IDP is developing a Web page, which will provide resources, program models, and information for various groups of patrons and library staff.

The Illinois State Library, through the Diversity Program, trains libraries' staff in diversity competencies. Brown's program presents thirty-five to forty training and awareness programs, reaching about two thousand people a year. Nine competency programs are offered such as: *Empowering Library Staff to Meet the Needs of Spanish Speakers* and *Little Black Sambo: Which Story Should I Read?*

[continued on page 6]

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IDP has six exhibits available for display in Illinois libraries, including: *Irish Heritage Month & Famous Irish Personalities Posters* and an exhibit honoring Gwendolyn Brooks is in production. The IDP has created and presented *350 Years of Jewish Life in America Heritage Program and Poster Display*, a national exhibit. Fifteen to twenty exhibits are created and displayed yearly throughout the state.

IDP partners with Illinois libraries to get grants for programs. The Illinois State Library's creative partnership with area hospital libraries garnered the grant for *The Changing Face of Medicine Exhibit: Celebrating America's Women Physicians* planned for 2010 to honor contributions from culturally diverse women physicians.

Additionally, IDP has a sub-group called Partnering Program Libraries. Every year the group plans and presents outstanding Black History Month Programs in libraries throughout Illinois. Costs are shared amongst participating libraries.

Speakers including Barack Obama and librarians from the Gerber/Hart Library in Chicago have made presentations at events organized by the IDP.

Participants or program advisors evaluate all programs. The results are positive. Library staff and administrators have requested more workshops on African Americans, Asians, Muslim religions, and Hispanic/Latinos. Brown says, "It is often said, libraries offer the world to their users, but libraries do not know how to welcome the world's diversity with that same offering. The Diversity Program will continue its roles in providing culture and competency training, but in the future it will begin a vital initiative in assisting libraries in action for recruitment, retention, and leadership of minorities in the library profession and workforce."

## SCHAUMBURG TOWNSHIP DISTRICT LIBRARY: A MULTICULTURAL PUBLIC LIBRARY

Schaumburg Township District Library (STDL) serves a diverse population of more than 130,000. More than fifty different languages are spoken in Schaumburg and the other communities it serves, Hoffman Estates and Hanover Park. Barbara Adrianopoli, director of extension services and branches at Schaumburg Township District Library, described what her library is doing to successfully provide access to a multicultural community. She stated that STDL's mission is to be a premier provider of equal access for all to quality information, materials, programming, and facilities.

In June 2007, STDL circulated 4,027 DVDs and 364 VHSs in international languages. The Korean Friends of the Library's Korean collection circulates an average of 2,400-2,500 books monthly. Other international languages represented in adult services and youth services include: Spanish, Polish, Russian, Arabic, Gujarati, Hindi, Bengali, Urdu, German, French, Hebrew, Japanese, Italian, Chinese, and Vietnamese.

In addition to library programming, Adrianopoli and her staff work closely with their community to ensure the level of service they provide meets their users' needs. For instance, the library works with the local school district's continuing education department to provide a Read to Learn program and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. STDL's Extension Services has a literacy coordinator who gives a weekly computer-assisted program to ESL students. A wide variety of software is used, focusing on a broad array of issues and challenges for an ESL student.

"Libraries offer the world to their users, but libraries do not know how to welcome the world's diversity with that same offering."



“In our multicultural state, these three libraries are excellent role models in diversity competency.”

The library also has a Polish Book Discussion Club and Italian and Hindi language classes are taught at the library. The young adult librarian works with her teen club to present ethnic programs. For example, this past February for Black History Month, the Teen Board presented a program on the Underground Railroad. STDL also has a high school liaison who organizes a popular annual Ethnic Food Fest, which attracts 400-500 people.

The Extension Department also partners with the Village of Hoffman Estates' Cultural Awareness Commission to provide books and other material for Black History Month and a Latino Awareness program.

STDL's Youth Services Department works with the local school district and Extension Services to provide programming for a mostly Spanish-speaking subsidized apartment complex in Hoffman Estates. Hoffman Estates Police and Health and Human Services staff are involved with the library at this housing complex as well. The Hoffman Estates Park District used to transport recent immigrants to the library. Now, the families feel comfortable coming to the library on their own.

Adrianopoli recalls, “One of the fun times was when Extension Services employee Mary Garvey and her husband dressed up like Mr. and Mrs. Santa Claus and joined the rest of the department at the annual holiday party held for the Spanish-speaking residents of the apartment complex. The staff gave gifts to a chosen family, and all of the children in the complex received a hardcover book, and the parents and children were excited that they were in Spanish. One mother said, ‘Now we can read together.’”

## CONCLUSION

Northwestern University Library, Illinois State Library, and Schaumburg Township District Library will remain vital to their communities because they continue to engage diverse populations. There are a number of factors, which will ensure that these libraries will remain relevant. These include appropriate collection development, access to technologies, programming geared toward specific groups, and availability of facilities. In our multicultural state, these three libraries are excellent role models in diversity competency. 

# Tips for Success in Diversity for Multi-type Libraries

- Set goals; for example Schaumburg strives to successfully provide access for all to quality information, technology, materials, programming, and facilities.
- Involve other/all departments in projects.
- Train staff to relate to and work with diverse communities, and employ minority and special interest librarians.
- Plan events that honor heritage and multiculturalism such as Women's History Month.
- Involve local school districts in planning programming such as English as a Second Language.
- Partner with local cultural organizations when appropriate.
- Partner with local governmental organizations when appropriate.
- Engage local businesses in programming when appropriate.
- Be creative.
- Evaluate programming; get input from community members as well as library staff.

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CR



# Emergency Exception to the Illinois Library Records Confidentiality Act

**F**or the first time in more than two decades, the Illinois General Assembly has approved legislation amending the Illinois Library Records Confidentiality Act (House Bill 237, Public Act 95-0040, effective January 1, 2008). The amendment creates a narrow exception allowing law enforcement officers without a court order to request information from a library regarding the identity of certain persons in emergency situations. The Illinois Library Association (ILA) was pivotal in making sure that this new narrow exception does not infringe on the privacy rights of library patrons.

Rep. Joe Dunn (R-Naperville), on behalf of the City of Naperville, filed legislation two years ago providing a broad exemption to allow police and other law enforcement officers to get any library registration or circulation records without a court order. ILA strongly opposed the original legislation and over a period of two years worked with Rep. Dunn to craft the final bill. (See February 2005 *ILA Reporter*, “Confidentiality: A Case Study in Progress.”)

“No library registration or circulation records are to be made public without a court order.”

In the end, the only persuasive reason for the police to get any information without a court order was an emergency in which waiting for a court order would result in a real risk of someone being injured or killed.

Under Public Act 95-0040, the general rule under the Library Records Confidentiality Act remains the same — no library registration or circulation records are to be made public without a court order. Public Act 95-0040 adds a single exception to this requirement if ALL of the following conditions are met:

1. A sworn law enforcement officer states that it is impractical to get a court order as a result of an emergency situation;
2. There is probable cause to believe that there is imminent danger that someone will be physically harmed;
3. The information requested is limited to only identifying a suspect, witness, or victim of a crime; and
4. The information does not include any registration or circulation records that would indicate materials borrowed, resources reviewed, or services used at the library.

It must be emphasized that only information identifying a suspect, witness, or victim may be publicly disclosed to a sworn law enforcement officer without a court order. No other information is exempt from the court order process.

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“The library would have the option of requiring law enforcement officers to actually sign a statement acknowledging receipt of the information.”

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In addition to this key limitation, other provisions were included to reaffirm patron privacy and protect libraries. The library would have the option of requiring law enforcement officers to actually sign a statement acknowledging receipt of the information. [See sidebar for an ILA suggested form]. The library even has the right to subsequently ask a court to review whether the request complied with the law. Libraries are also protected from claims that disclosure under the law constituted a breach of confidentiality by the library. Finally, the right of a patron to challenge the disclosure under any other law would still be preserved.

The long and careful negotiations on this legislation demonstrate the high value the library community places on patron confidentiality. Ultimately, the bill's sponsor agreed to every change requested by the ILA Executive Board. As a result, the board took a neutral position on the final amended bill.

Even with such a limited bill, ILA remains concerned that some police officers will misconstrue or misunderstand this legislation to contain a broader exception than is actually allowed. ILA will be working diligently to assist libraries in understanding the limited scope of this new law and to insure that proper identification by sworn law enforcement officers is obtained, prior to such limited disclosure. To this end, we have included a suggested format for a statement that could be used when police make a request without a court order. This statement reflects all of the required criteria that must be satisfied. We will also be discussing the new law at the 2007 ILA Annual Conference and other forums.

While there is always a risk of abuse, ultimately the legislature struck a balance ensuring that patrons have clear and secure privacy rights, as well as personal safety.

*ILA thanks Kip Kolkmeier for writing this article. It was reviewed and substantive, constructive comments were made by attorneys Phil Lenzini from Kavanagh, Scully, Sudow, White & Frederick, P.C.; Roger A. Ritzman from Peregrine, Stime, Newman, Ritzman & Bruckner, Ltd.; and Deborah Caldwell-Stone from the American Library Association's Office for Intellectual Freedom.*

*ILA urges the Illinois library community to incorporate this information and form in their library procedures, to use this form when appropriate, to instruct all staff to follow the law, and to value and safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of library records. ILA*

# ILLINOIS LIBRARY RECORDS CONFIDENTIALITY ACT EMERGENCY RELEASE OF INFORMATION IDENTIFYING INDIVIDUALS PURSUANT TO PUBLIC ACT 95-0040

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The Illinois Library Records Confidentiality Act requires a court order before a library may publicly release information contained in library registration or circulation records. Public Act 95-0040 created an exception to the requirement for a court order if ALL of the following conditions are met:

1. The information is requested by a sworn law enforcement officer who states that it is impractical to get a court order as a result of an emergency situation;
2. The law enforcement officer states that there is probable cause to believe that there is imminent danger that someone will be physically harmed;
3. The information requested is limited to only identifying a suspect, witness, or victim of a crime; and
4. The information does not include any registration or circulation records that would indicate materials borrowed, resources reviewed, or services used at the library.

Public Act 95-0040 also provides that “If requested to do so by the library, the requesting law enforcement officer must sign a form acknowledging the receipt of the information. A library providing the information may seek subsequent judicial review to assess compliance with this Section.”

A suggested Statement of Compliance follows.

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# OFFICER'S REQUEST FOR CONFIDENTIAL LIBRARY INFORMATION

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- A. This is a request under the Illinois Library Records Confidentiality Act, 75 ILCS 70/1 (copy attached) for information contained in the library's registration and/or circulation records.
- B. My request for information is limited to identifying a "suspect, witness, or victim of a crime."
- C. As the basis for this request, I represent the following:
  - 1. I am a sworn law enforcement officer.
  - 2. As a result of an emergency where I believe there is imminent danger of physical harm, it is impractical to secure a Court Order for the identification information.
- D. The information I request relates to the following (Description of information sought):

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**Officer's Acknowledgment**

I acknowledge receipt from the library of the information I requested.

_____ Officer's printed name	_____ Officer's Agency/Department	_____ Officer's signature
_____ Officer's badge number	_____ Time signed	_____ Date signed

---

**(Library Use Only)**

Name(s) of Library Staff assisting with the information requested:

---



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# Sally in

# Libraryland



I have a new job (if you just looked at the top of this column to see if I'm still at Indian Trails, I am quite sure you are not the only one—because every conversation I've had in the past month that started with "I have a new job," was followed by, "You left Indian Trails?"). I am indeed still at Indian Trails, but I am now part-time, and although my new duties are in large part being made up as we go along, it's going pretty well so far.

The shortest possible explanation of why this happened: I made a poor choice of ancestors when I was too young to make good choices about anything, and I have developed this spine that my orthopedic surgeon describes as a train wreck. Working full time consumed pretty much all the energy I have, and for a while now I've wanted to go part-time to have more time and energy for the writing and speaking that have become such a joyful part of my library life.

That, of course, grossly oversimplifies the background drama, which includes former-hippie soul searching about how much income is really enough, and feminist soul searching about how I feel about being dependent on my husband for health insurance, and the fear that the moment I rely on some supplementary income from writing and speaking—which until now has been windfall surprise bonus money—no one will ever want me to write for or speak to them, ever again. Ultimately, I decided that I'm not going to let my life be ruled by fear, and with enormous understanding, cooperation, and accommodation from Tamiye Meehan, our director, I've made my leap into the unknown.

My new title is special services librarian—it strikes just the right balance between important and vague, I think, which is what's needed for a job that is being developed day by day. I expect that my favorite part will be corporate schmoozing—building relationships with the large corporations within the district, with

two goals in mind: raising awareness of what the library can do for them and, down the road, raising some funds from them so we can do more and better. And I get to use my reference skills to find them! Nearly tied for that in terms of focus—and closely related—will be my responsibilities as grant writer. I am, candidly, a little less confident that I'll love that part, because my normal writing style (as you may know) tends to be slanted toward the storytelling, and I'm always going for the laugh. It strikes me that that probably is not an approach funders are looking for, so I expect to struggle some. (I was delighted to see that Amanda Standerfer will be moderating a preconference at ILA on "Fundraising for Success"—I am going to be there!).

"This library community of ours is richly populated with people who are doing amazing things, and, in the process, supporting others who are doing new and different amazing things."

As I work my way through whatever struggles come with this position, I'm keeping in mind the immortal insight of Lesley Williams of the Evanston Public Library, who at a program on career development I attended years ago, said something to the effect that if your job doesn't give you moments regularly when your heart beats faster, your palms sweat, and you wonder how in the world you're going to pull this off, it's not providing any challenges. So I'm considering my uncertainty a good thing.

I will also get to keep two hours a month covering AskAway, be one of the people available to pitch in when crises occur that make us fear the reference service points will become self-service by default, and will still chair and belong to in-house committees. My involvement with ILA and ALA will continue to be supported. It's all pretty exciting.

Moving out of an office I've occupied for ten years into a cube was more traumatic for other people than it's been for me, although stuffing ten pounds of work-related stuff into a five-pound space is being an adventure, and I am temporarily working in some chaos until someone can find the overhead bin that vanished from this cube some time back. I have faith it will be soon.

As I embark upon this adventure, there are a couple of groups of people I'd love to hear from: anyone who has made a job change to further life goals rather than career goals, and anyone whose job description includes "corporate schmoozing" (however it may actually be phrased) as a responsibility.

And since I'm asking for input from the grand and glorious ILA membership, here are two requests in an entirely different vein: First, it has come to my attention that we are being blessed with a new active and high-achieving group of board members and directors. I would love to talk to the newest members of our community, the board members and directors who are under thirty-five. Some, I know, are well under thirty-five. If you are one, or know one, would you drop me an e-mail?

Lastly: at the July ILA Orientation Session at the Alliance Library System, there were approximately one hundred library people in the room. Imagine our surprise and delight to learn that at least four of them were belly dancers—one being our President-elect Donna Dziedzic! With a percentage like that

in one room at one time, I suspect there are more library staff/belly dancers than any of us might have guessed. I'd love to talk to them too! If you are willing to be named, or even if you are just willing to talk to me, would you get in touch?

This library community of ours is richly populated with people who are doing amazing things, and, in the process, supporting others who are doing new and different amazing things. I'm glad I get to interact with so many of you!

E-mail ([sallyinlibraryland@yahoo.com](mailto:sallyinlibraryland@yahoo.com)) or fax (847) 459-4760 or write (355 S. Schoenbeck Road, Wheeling, IL 60090) your tale to me, and then watch this space! 

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Library-related stories appearing in local Illinois news media are reflected in this section of the *ILA Reporter*. The intent is to alert and inform other libraries about issues and events that are considered significant by the general media. The draft *ILA Reporter* text is sent to the library in question for accuracy before being published here.

## Creating & Connecting: Research and Guidelines on Online Social – and Educational – Networking

National School Boards Association (a nonprofit that represents 95,000 U.S. school-board members) did a comprehensive study of students' experiences with the Internet, especially with social networking sites. They determined that the much-touted risk of online stalkers and predators was basically nonexistent (0.08 percent of students surveyed had gone to meet a stranger without parental permission). The best part is their recommendation to schools: stop fearing the Internet and embrace it as an incredible tool for instruction.

In light of these findings, they're recommending that school districts may want to "explore ways in which they could use social networking for educational purposes" — and reconsider some of their fears. It won't be the first time educators have feared a new technology, the study warns. "Many schools initially banned or restricted Internet use, only to ease up when the educational value of the Internet became clear. The same is likely to be the case with social networking.

"Safety policies remain important, as does teaching students about online safety and responsible online expression — but students may learn these lessons better while they're actually using social networking tools."

Social networking may be advantageous to students — and there could already be a double standard at work. Thirty-seven percent of districts say at

least 90 percent of their staff are participating in online communities of their own — related to education — and 59 percent of districts said that at least half were participating. "These findings indicate that educators find value in social networking," the study notes, "and suggest that many already are comfortable and knowledgeable enough to use social networking for educational purposes with their students."

The report is available at ILA Web site [www.ila.org/netsafe/index.htm](http://www.ila.org/netsafe/index.htm).

## Winnetka Library to Be Scene of the Crime

Some people celebrate their retirement with a party. Barbara Aron will exit her role as director of the Winnetka-Northfield Public Library in October by being bumped off, according to the August 2 *Winnetka Talk*. Aron gave local author Libby Fischer Hellmann permission to include her as a character in the tentatively titled, "So Many Books: A Winnetka Library Mystery," a novella Hellmann co-wrote especially for adult patrons of the library.

"She's murdered in the first chapter," Hellmann said. The library board might make the first chapters available on the library's Web site in late October. But the identity of the killer will only be revealed when the final chapter is read aloud by the author at a wine and cheese party at the library, Aron said.

Hellmann has lived on the border of Northbrook and Northfield for the past twenty-one years. She penned the story, set in the Winnetka area and populated in part by members of the library staff,

with co-author and fellow crime fiction writer David Jay Walker of Wilmette. Hellmann said she and Walker plan to submit the story to the library board in August.

She said this was her first experience co-writing a story. "David and I wrote alternating chapters," she said. "But we would have to get together once or twice a week because things happen when you're writing a chapter. Things change. Sometimes there's a new character you weren't planning on. Both of us wrote in a voice that is not typically our writing style," Hellmann said. "We had a little more fun. It was more colorful."

Hellmann is a Washington, D.C., transplant who has lived in the Chicago area for nearly thirty years. She has published a series of four mystery novels since 2002. Recently Hellmann edited an anthology of short stories by twenty-one Chicago crime fiction authors called "Chicago Blues."

"She's one of ours, and we're proud to have her," said Juli Janovicz, head of adult services at the library, who worked with Aron and Hellmann to organize the project. "Her stories always have a recognizable North Shore setting. The last one was at Lake Geneva."

Though her treatment of Aron in the novella suggests otherwise, Hellmann said her respect for librarians prompted her to initiate this project. "Librarians are some of my favorite people," she said. "They're the guardians of our literature. Anything I can do to help publicize libraries and help people understand how important they are, I'll do."

## Gail Borden Plan for Geothermal System Tanks

The geothermal heating and cooling system the Gail Borden Public Library District's Board had been considering for its branch facility may not be feasible, reported the August 17 *Courier News*. According to information made available to the board — including that from test wells and soil samples — the system that uses underground pipes to cool or heat water wouldn't pay for itself for at least forty years.

That makes the system financially unfeasible, board members agreed. "I recommend we don't do the geothermal system," said Richard McCarthy, library board president. The board held off on a formal vote, however, until the entire study could be presented to members.

The library board did get some positive news about the planned Bowes Road branch facility. Construction costs, including the geothermal system, are estimated at about \$5.2 million, with available funds of about \$5.8 million. Some of the additional funds came as a surprise, library director Carole Medal said.

The library's auditors informed her recently of an additional \$800,000 in the fund balance. Those funds were set aside by a previous administration to complete projects in the downtown library, which opened to the public in October 2004. The funds have built up over time, Medal said. She asked that the money be moved to a special reserve fund for branch construction. Construction could begin this November, with completion in December 2008.

## Reading Habits of Americans

One in four adults say they read no books at all in the past year, according to an Associated Press-Ipsos poll released August 21. Of those who did read, women and seniors were most avid, and religious works and popular fiction were the top choices.

The survey reveals a nation whose book readers, on the whole, can hardly be called ravenous. The typical person

claimed to have read four books in the last year — half read more and half read fewer. Excluding those who hadn't read any, the usual number read was seven.

"I just get sleepy when I read," said Richard Bustos of Dallas, Texas, a habit with which millions of Americans can doubtless identify. Bustos, a 34-year-old project manager for a telecommunications company, said he had not read any books in the last year and would rather spend time in his backyard pool.

That choice by Bustos and others is reflected in book sales, which have been flat in recent years and are expected to stay that way indefinitely. Analysts attribute the listlessness to competition from the Internet and other media, the unsteady economy, and a well-established industry with limited opportunities for expansion.

When the Gallup poll asked in 2005 how many books people had at least started — a similar but not directly comparable question — the typical answer was five. That was down from ten in 1999, but close to the 1990 response of six. In 2004, a National Endowment for the Arts report titled "Reading at Risk" found only 57 percent of American adults had read a book in 2002, a four percentage point drop in a decade. The study faulted television, movies, and the Internet.

Who are the 27 percent of people the AP-Ipsos poll found hadn't read a single book this year? Nearly a third of men and a quarter of women fit that category. They tend to be older, less educated, lower income, minorities and from rural areas.

People from the South read a bit more than those from other regions, mostly religious books and romance novels. Whites read more than blacks and Hispanics, and those who said they never attend religious services read nearly twice as many as those who attend frequently. There was even some political variety evident, with Democrats and liberals typically reading slightly more books than Republicans and conservatives.

The Bible and religious works were read by two-thirds in the survey, more than all other categories. Those likeliest to read religious books included older and married women, lower earners, minorities, lesser educated people, Southerners, rural

residents, Republicans, and conservatives. Popular fiction, histories, biographies, and mysteries were all cited by about half, while one in five read romance novels. Every other genre — including politics, poetry, and classical literature — were named by fewer than five percent of readers. More women than men read every major category of books except for history and biography. Industry experts said that confirms their observation that men tend to prefer nonfiction. "Fiction just doesn't interest me," said Bob Ryan, 41, who works for a construction company in Guntersville, Alabama. "If I'm going to get a story, I'll get a movie."

The publishing business totaled \$35.7 billion in global sales last year, 3 percent more than the previous year, according to the Book Industry Study Group, a trade association. About 3.1 billion books were sold, an increase of less than 1 percent.

## University of Chicago Library in Top Twenty

Based on students' assessment of library facilities, the *Princeton Review* ranking follows:

- 1 Harvard College
- 2 Princeton University
- 3 Brigham Young University
- 4 Cornell University
- 5 West Virginia University
- 6 Loyola University New Orleans
- 7 Whitman College
- 8 Columbia University—Columbia College
- 9 Saint Olaf College
- 10 Wesleyan University
- 11 University of Chicago
- 12 Dickinson College
- 13 Stanford University
- 14 Mount Holyoke College
- 15 Emory University
- 16 University of Virginia
- 17 The University of Texas at Austin
- 18 Valparaiso University
- 19 Furman University
- 20 University of Tennessee—Knoxville

<http://www.princetonreview.com/college/research/rankings>

## Exhibit Passes Are Free

At the 2007 ILA Annual Conference, more than 140 vendors will be on-site to demonstrate and display a wide range of products and services. The exhibits are free and open to all interested. To obtain a free exhibit pass, just go to the ILA registration desk at the Prairie Capital Convention Center.

### Exhibit Hours:

Wednesday, October 10, 12:30–5:00 P.M.  
Thursday, October 11, 9:00 A.M.–2:00 P.M.

Please note that exhibits will not be open on Friday, October 12.

## Nominees Sought

The ILA 2008 Nominating Committee is soliciting nominees to run on the 2008 spring ballot for the Executive Board, including the office of ILA Vice President/President-elect.

The Nominating Committee will select two candidates to run for each of the four Director-at-Large seats and the Vice President/President-elect.

The President-elect will serve a three-year term as: President-elect in 2008–2009, President in 2009–2010, and Immediate Past President in 2010–2011. Director-at-Large seats are also three-year terms.

The Illinois Library Association Executive Board is the governing body of the association and is comprised of fifteen directors serving a three-year term. The board adopts and oversees implementation and evaluates all plans, policies, programs, and budget for the association. Together, board members constitute leadership of the association and assume responsibility for its success.

Members who wish to make nominations should submit the following information: nominee name; present position; institution; address; telephone; fax; and e-mail address.

Self-nominations are encouraged. All potential nominees will be asked to com-

plete a Potential Candidate Biographical Form that will be e-mailed to them.

Nominations may be sent to any member of the 2008 Nominating Committee or the chair:  
Tamiye Meehan, Indian Trails Public Library District;  
e-mail: [tmeehan@indiantrailslibrary.org](mailto:tmeehan@indiantrailslibrary.org).

## NILRC Awarded Grant for Community College Librarianship Education

NILRC: Network of Illinois Learning Resources in Community Colleges, a library consortium with members throughout Illinois and Missouri, has been awarded a Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program grant through the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). The grant will support the recruitment and training of a twenty-student cohort for work in community college libraries, in partnership with the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), Graduate School of Library and Information Science.

The grant is called: *Librarians Serving Community-based Higher Education: Preparing the Next Generation of Community College Librarians*. Beginning in 2007, this grant will provide a community college librarianship-focused MLS degree program for twenty students through UIUC's Graduate School of Library and Information Science over the course of two years. The program will culminate with internship employment in one of eleven partner community college libraries in Illinois or Missouri.

The grant seeks to recruit a diverse group of candidates for the MLS degree who will become well-prepared professionals serving the non-traditional, diverse, commuter-based student populations in community-based academic libraries.

Candidates who wish to apply for this Community College Librarianship Education program must meet requirements for admission to UIUC GSLIS

([www.lis.uiuc.edu](http://www.lis.uiuc.edu)) and will have a strong interest in librarianship in the community college setting. Candidates eligible for admission to GSLIS will submit separate additional application materials to NILRC ([www.nilrc.org](http://www.nilrc.org)) to be considered for inclusion in the grant. Students enrolled in the program will develop relationships with participating community college library mentors. Assignment to a highly structured, mentored, paid internship for six months at degree completion is a component of this award.

The graduate curriculum will include courses taught through UIUC's Community College Teaching and Learning (CCTL) program in the College of Education, as complementary to GSLIS-required and elective coursework.

For additional details on this program, contact Sally Duchow, NILRC IMLS Grant Project Manager, at [sduchow@uiuc.edu](mailto:sduchow@uiuc.edu).

## 2007 Charlotte Kim Scholars in Residence Program

The Chicago Public Library (CPL) invites ILA members to the 2007 Charlotte Kim Scholars in Residence Program on Wednesday, November 7 from 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. at the Harold Washington Library Center, 400 S. State Street, Chicago.

George Needham, vice president of OCLC, will present new data on *"To See Ourselves As Others See Us."* Needham will be joined by three panelists: Veronda J. Pitchford, Urban Libraries Council; ILA President Bradley F. Baker, Northeastern Illinois University; and Patricia Martin, LitLamp Communications Group, Inc.

This year, CPL will offer 5.5 CPDUs and 5 CEUs for continuing education credits. Please contact Joan Levey at (312) 747-4963, or e-mail: [jlevey@chipublish.org](mailto:jlevey@chipublish.org), for additional information and for registration instructions.

## New Law Provides Changes to the Illinois Open Meetings Act

House Bill 1670 (Public Act 95-0245) was signed by the governor on August 17, 2007, and became effective immediately. This law amends the definition of “meeting” for five-member public bodies, such as certain library districts, under the Illinois Open Meetings Act. Previously a “meeting” was defined as any gathering of a majority of a quorum of the members of the public body held for the purposes of discussing public business. This vexed many five-person library boards, because a quorum was three members and, therefore, a majority of a quorum was two members. By

application of the previous rule, two library board members could not speak about even insignificant library business without committing a technical violation of the act.

Under this new amendment, the definition of “meeting” for five-member public bodies has been amended so that a meeting is now a quorum of the board, instead of a majority of the quorum. According to Keri-Lyn J. Krafthefer and W. Britt Isaly from Ancel Glink, this amendment will make a world of difference for five-person library board members, because now two board members speaking about public business does not constitute a “meeting” and, therefore, does not violate the law. This amendment also applies to five-member library committees.

Krafthefer and Isaly state that since now two library board members can speak about library business in private, one concern was that those two members could decide library matters out of the context of a public meeting. To prevent that from happening, this new law changes the vote requirement required for five-member library boards to act. Under this new law, three members of the body constitute a quorum and the affirmative vote of three members is necessary to adopt any motion, resolution, or ordinance, unless a greater number are otherwise required. What this amendment does, probably inadvertently, is to make every abstention a vote that does not fall with the majority.



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# ILA Welcomes New Members

We would love to welcome your friends and colleagues, too. By sponsoring a new member, you share the benefits of membership with others... and help create a stronger and more effective voice to promote the highest quality library services for all people in Illinois.

## ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

**Elsevier**, Saint Louis, Mo.  
**PHN Architects**, Wheaton

## INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERS

**Centralia Regional Library District**  
**JKM Library**, Chicago

## PERSONAL MEMBERS

**Norma Applegate**, Prairie Area Library System, Shorewood  
**Jill Bambenek**, Dominican University, River Forest  
**Nicholas Bennyhoff**, Lewis & Clark Library System, Edwardsville  
**Shelley Campbell**, West Chicago Public Library District  
**Margaret Chambers**, CARLI, Champaign  
**Kathy Clair**, Reddick Library, Ottawa  
**Heather Colby**, Homer Township Public Library District  
**Terry Cottrell**, University of Saint Francis Library, Joliet  
**Donna Cunningham**, Elkhart Public Library District  
**Susan Drissi**, Chillocothe Public Library District  
**Vicky Edwards**, Alliance Library System, East Peoria  
**Brooke Fenwick**, Lisle Library District  
**Laini Greenstein**, Chillocothe Public Library District  
**Susie Gutenberger**, Melrose Park Public Library  
**Lindsay Harmon**, American Academy of Art, Chicago  
**Thomas Hartmann**, Chicago  
**Richard Kong**, Skokie Public Library  
**Roberta Koscielski**, Peoria Public Library  
**Melissa G. Lane**, Gail Borden Public Library District, Elgin  
**Kathleen W. Langston**, Oak Park  
**Dale Ann Lawrence**, North Suburban Library System, Wheeling  
**Izora Lewis**, Glenside Public Library District  
**Nancy Maloney**, BP Library, Aurora  
**Jennifer Marquardt**, Acorn Public Library District, Oak Forest  
**Deb Meder**, Crete Public Library District  
**Kevin Medows**, Warren-Newport Public Library District, Gurnee  
**Arthur J. Moen**, Messenger Public Library of North Aurora  
**Anita Morgan**, St. Xavier University, Chicago  
**Rob Morrison**, National-Louis University, Wheeling  
**Sue Pajor**, Alsip-Merrionette Park Library District

**Kelly A. Pierson**, Bourbonnais Public Library  
**Mary Z. Rose**, Southern Illinois University Edwardsville  
**Miriam Rubinson**, Marquardt Middle School, Oak Park  
**Sara Sabo**, Gail Borden Public Library District, Elgin  
**Lisa Sarm**, Lincoln Library, Springfield  
**Gail Scott**, Crete Public Library District  
**Curt Tagtmeier**, Fremont Public Library District, Mundelein  
**Lorelei Williams**, Crete Public Library District

## STUDENT MEMBERS

**Genna M. Buhr**, Alliance Library System, East Peoria  
**Nicole Burchfield**, Brookfield Public Library  
**Erica J. Laughlin**, Washington  
**Miriam Lytle**, Gail Borden Public Library District, Elgin  
**Cynthia Maxwell**, Steger-South Chicago Heights Public Library District  
**Lisa O'Keefe**, Chicago  
**Megan Ower**, Zion-Benton Public Library District  
**Brad Reel**, Bradley  
**Suzanne Marie Ross**, Plainfield Public Library District  
**Natalie Tagge**, Illinois State Library, Springfield

## TRUSTEE MEMBERS

**Jo Ann Armenta**, Gail Borden Public Library District, Elgin  
**Robert Barth**, West Sangamon Public Library District, New Berlin  
**Randal Carben**, Bridgeview Public Library  
**Douglas P. Crew**, Peoria Public Library  
**Martin Durbin**, Acorn Public Library District, Oak Forest  
**John J. Gonczy**, Oak Lawn Public Library  
**Herb Gross**, Gail Borden Public Library District, Elgin  
**Paul Kramer**, West Sangamon Public Library District, New Berlin  
**Gary D. Lewis**, Bridgeview Public Library  
**Peter McNulty**, Glenview Public Library  
**James C. Mitchell Jr.**, Lake Villa District Library  
**Jeff Ogle**, Limestone Township Library, Kankakee  
**Sandra Peterson**, Nippersink Public Library District, Richmond  
**Claudia Robuck**, Prairie Trails Public Library District, Burbank  
**Susan Vigorita**, Acorn Public Library District, Oak Forest  
**Alice Vilimek**, Bridgeview Public Library  
**Larry Wegman**, Gail Borden Public Library District, Elgin

## Cultural and Racial Diversity Committee

Barbara Adrianopoli, Schaumburg Township District Library

### REASONS FOR HIRING A DIVERSE STAFF

Diversity is not only a buzzword now but also a reality. We are a nation and a state where in many counties the “minority is now the majority.” That should be reason enough to have a diverse staff. But, there are many other advantages. I spoke with staff who are the picture of this new society. Their responses are included in this “ten reasons for hiring a diverse staff.”

- 1) Claudia Manriquez Baranowski gives this feedback: “A cultural and diverse staff would benefit policy/ decision makers in deciding on services and materials needed to benefit specific groups who use the library.”
- 2) Claudia and others, like Sangeeta Bhargava and Kathy Tourtelot, all said that staff that speak their native language along with English can help non-English speakers who are limited in their verbal English skills with all the services of the library.
- 3) The staff member who wears the hijab (Muslim woman’s scarf) offers a comfort level to fellow Muslim women.
- 4) Hiring staff who reflect the community often brings in an increase of users. It is often good for staff to test this statement by walking into a completely different community’s business establishment or public building and feel the hesitancy that comes over you.
- 5) Helen Stewart, a British national, says, “It’s hard to get taken seriously in reference interviews when you aren’t American.”
- 6) Helen adds that “diverse hiring practices allow you to think outside the box.”
- 7) The staff and the public both benefit from hiring people from various ethnicities, nationalities, personalities, and ages. We learn from each other. A teen who is into the 2.0 era teaches us the virtual world. The teen is next year’s referendum voter.
- 8) Some of the older staff members probably marched in the civil rights movement or anti-war marches or fought in the war or fought for breaks in the glass ceilings. This time it is just a different march, but one for freedom and equality.
- 9) “Different cultures and races have different mannerisms and different ways of conducting themselves in a given situation,” says Sangeeta. Learning these differences helps us in our interaction and expectations.
- 10) And on a lighter note, Sangeeta says, “If you are fortunate, you may get to sample ethnic food and receive gifts from a foreign country.”

At the end of each day, the only important matter is that we have helped bring the library’s mission to those we met. The library is truly the place everyone should find refuge, knowledge, and enrichment.

## Illinois Association of College and Research Libraries (IACRL)

Jocelyn Tipton, Eastern Illinois University

IACRL is pleased to announce our 2008 Spring Conference. “Librarians as Leaders: Energizing our Communities” will take place March 27–28, 2008, at The Chateau in Bloomington. A preconference activity is being planned for March 26. More information about the conference is available on the IACRL Web site at <http://www.iacrl.net>. We are looking forward to your participation in making this a great conference.

The IACRL 2008 Spring Conference Planning Committee invites you to share your practical solutions, creative approaches, and philosophical observa-

tions that will inspire academic librarians in Illinois to provide leadership and energetically engage their communities. Presentations may highlight formal or informal opportunities for leadership in any part of the library (e.g., technical services, technology, instruction, administration). The submission deadline is December 10, 2007. The Planning Committee will review proposals and notify presenters by January 21, 2008.

Presentations may take the form of contributed papers, demonstrations, panel discussions, or posters.

Program sessions are scheduled for one hour, including at least ten minutes for questions from the audience.

### Please include the following information when submitting your proposal:

Title:

Format (paper, demonstration, panel discussion, poster):

Description (approximately 100 words):

Presenters:

Name, Address, City/State, Phone, Fax, E-mail:

Please e-mail your program proposal (and direct any questions) to: Sarah George Wessel, Illinois Wesleyan University, e-mail: [sgeorge@iwu.edu](mailto:sgeorge@iwu.edu).

## Reaching Forward Forum for Library Support Staff

Sally Schuster, Addison Public Library

The Reaching Forward Conference for Library Support Staff is one of the largest one-day library conferences in this country. What are the secrets that make Reaching Forward a success year after year?

### Secret No. 1: We listen to you!

The planning committee reads all of the feedback those of you attending the conference give us. We look at the suggestions made and try to implement these ideas whenever it is feasible. For example, someone suggested that we include a vegetarian meal choice on the registration form. Last year, this was

done. We also want to know which programs you liked and the reasons they were enjoyable or useful. We use that information when planning the programs for future conventions.

**Secret No. 2: Everyone on the planning committee does something!**

You've all been involved with a group in which a few people do almost everything, year after year. That does not happen on this committee! When a need arises, someone always willingly volunteers to do that job. Everyone does something; no one does it all!

**Secret No. 3: The planning committee begins early!**

As soon as the 2007 conference wrapped up, the committee began working on 2008. The date—May 9, 2008—has been selected. The location—the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center, 5555 North River Road, Rosemont, Illinois—has been reserved. Speaker topics come next.

Ideas are tossed around and then selected. Committee members suggest possible speakers and volunteer to secure them. Subcommittees handle vendors and exhibitors, conference assistants, publicity, packet materials, evaluations, etc. As May 2008 gets closer, the details are finalized, and we all get ready for packet day! That's the day we place all of the things in the packet of materials you get at the conference. It is hard work, but we all manage a few laughs at each meeting. And, we all look forward to lunch!

**Secret No. 4: We count on you to tell your coworkers about Reaching Forward!** Without all of the positive feedback you take to your colleagues, Reaching Forward would not have grown to have more than 1,000 people attending each year. We could not attract the quality keynote speakers we have and hope to have in 2008. So keep up the good work, and do not keep Reaching

Forward a secret.

**Secret No. 5: Everyone who is interested in joining the planning committee is welcome!** Although Tom Rich and Tobi Oberman claim you join this committee for life, it is not quite true. There are a several members who have been on the committee from the beginning, but there are new faces joining each year. Each is made to feel welcome and a part of something very special.

**Secret No. 6: ILA!** The ILA staff handles many of the operational details of Reaching Forward. This conference would not be what it is without the support we receive from them. They handle the contracts, registration, signage, printing, financial details, and more.

There are many more things that go into making Reaching Forward the success that it is. The friendship that grows among this group of people from nine-



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<http://slisweb.sjsu.edu>

teen different libraries and systems is one of the most rewarding aspects of being a part of the planning committee. That alone explains why several retirees are still with us. If you are interested in joining us, we'd love to have you!

## Resources and Technical Services Forum

Joy Anhalt, Tinley Park Public Library

The Resources and Technical Services Forum is sponsoring three programs at this year's conference. Please join us at the preconference on Tuesday, October 9, for Tomorrow's Libraries Today. We will learn about the practical applications of Library 2.0 and social software. If you have that odd item to catalog and just don't know where to begin, the panel for Technical Services Tips & Tricks on Wednesday, October 10, will be able to provide some insight. And for those new

bloggers on Thursday, October 11, come learn about Blogging Beyond the Basics.

The forum will meet on Thursday, October 11, from 8:00 to 9:00 A.M. where we will begin planning for next year's conference and elect a new forum manager. Volunteers are also needed to contribute articles to the *ILA Reporter* and assist with the forum's award. If you are interested in participating and are unable to attend the conference please contact Joy Anhalt (phone: (708) 845-5713; e-mail: [j\\_anhalt@tplibrary.org](mailto:j_anhalt@tplibrary.org)).

## Young Adult Services Forum

Sharon Ball, North Suburban Library System

Greetings from the Young Adult Services Forum (YASF)! Besides planning programs and a reception for the upcoming ILA Annual Conference, an online

community of practice (CoP) has been established for the purpose of sharing information and gathering best practices in young adult library service statewide. (A month ago, the YASF CoP went live and is hosted by the North Suburban Library System.)

The YASF Community of Practice contains four sections:

**Recent Discussions**—an area for posting announcements and sharing ideas and best practices

**Upcoming Events**—a calendar of future events

**Newest Members**—a directory of members

**Other Activity**—a place for the sharing of files and Web links

YASF is extending an invitation to all Illinois YA librarians to become an active member in the CoP. To date, there are

## Interested in teaching on-line?



The School of Library and Information Science at San José State University is seeking applications for part-time faculty members interested in teaching on-line courses, especially in information retrieval, management, and information and society.

We use BlackBoard and Elluminate. Please visit <http://slisweb.sjsu.edu/> for course offerings and class schedules.

A twenty hour on-line program in teaching by distance is available and required for new faculty.

Send electronic resume and indicate which courses you would be available to teach. Ph.D. is preferred.

Please contact Dr. Linda Main at [lmain@slis.sjsu.edu](mailto:lmain@slis.sjsu.edu).

fifty-one members and we'd like YOU to join us. Here's how:

Since the North Suburban Library System (NSLS) is hosting this online community, it is necessary for you to first register on the NSLS Web site before becoming a member of the YASF Community of Practice.

**Step One:** Registering at the NSLS Web site:

- Travel to the NSLS Web site at [www.nsls.info](http://www.nsls.info).
- Look for the Sign In box on the left side of the page.
- Under the two blank boxes in the Sign In section, click on the "Not a Registered User?" link.
- On the next page complete the short form by filling in the four sections. (If you are not an NSLS member, click on "Non-Member" in section three.)
- Submit your information.

**Step Two:** Directions for NSLS and non-system members to become a member of the Young Adult Services Forum Community of Practice (YASF CoP):

- Travel directly to [www.nsls.info/yasf/](http://www.nsls.info/yasf/).
- If you are not already signed in to the site, you will be asked to sign in with your e-mail and password.

- Once on the YASF Community of Practice page, you will find a link to "Join." Click on this link and agree to the netiquette rules. (Sharon Ball, YASF Manager, will be notified of your interest to join and will admit you into the Community. You will receive a welcome via e-mail.)

If you have any questions, please contact Sharon Ball at [sball@nsls.info](mailto:sball@nsls.info). YASF looks forward to meeting you soon in the Community of Practice.

### Youth Services Forum

Kelly Laszczak, Orland Park Public Library

Paula Lopatic of the Vespasian Warner Public Library in Clinton began her duties as the manager of the Youth Services Forum on July 1.

The forum is hosting two social events at the ILA Annual Conference in Springfield this year. On Wednesday, October 10 at 7:00 P.M. the Youth Services Forum will host Stories and Spirits to give youth services and young adult librarians an opportunity to network and relax. The annual Youth

Services Breakfast will be held Thursday, October 11 from 8:30 to 10:00 A.M. The Golden Ticket and Davis Cup Award winners will be announced and iREAD will celebrate the summer 2008 program "Get in the Game—Read," with feature illustrator Tom Lichtenheld. Also, be sure to participate in the youth services track events at the conference.

To keep up with the forum and to network with youth services librarians in Illinois, check out our public discussion group at:  
<http://groups.google.com/group/youth-services-forum>.

We are hoping to use this discussion group to communicate about programming ideas, performer recommendations, and other issues related to serving youth in the state of Illinois. Feel free to add to discussion threads and create new ones.

# Library Jobline of Illinois

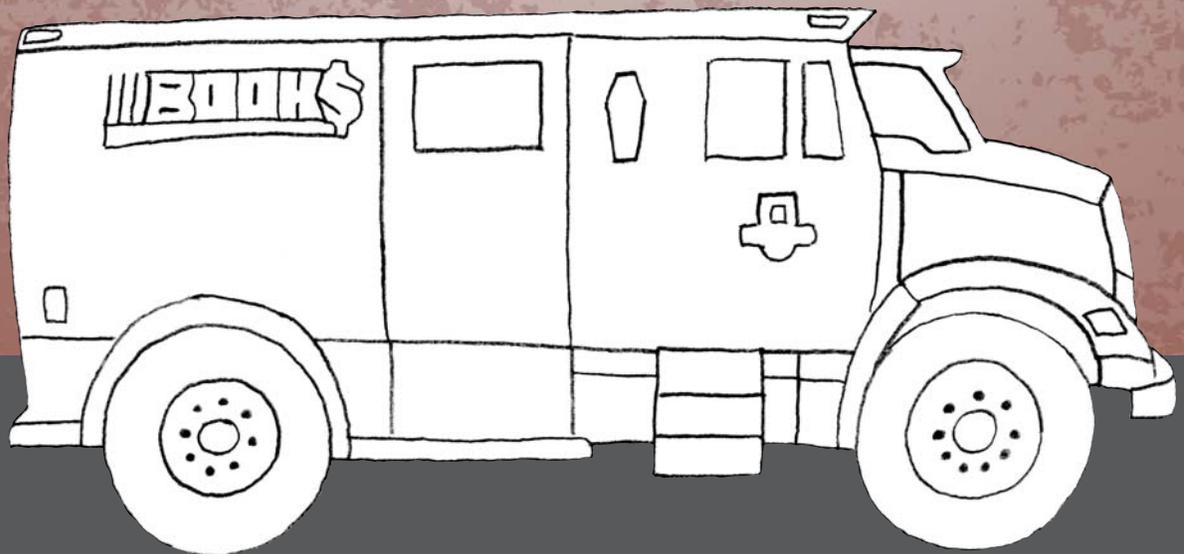
<http://www.ila.org/jobline>



### Positions for Librarians and Support Staff

All employer job openings are listed on the ILA Web site ([www.ila.org/jobline](http://www.ila.org/jobline)) for 30 days and the cost is \$100.

**ILLINOIS  
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AND SENSE**



**The Illinois Library Association** is the voice for Illinois libraries and the millions who depend on them. It provides leadership for the development, promotion, and improvement of library services in Illinois and for the library community in order to enhance learning and ensure access to information for all.

Its primary goals are:

- Advocating for the Public Interest
- Promoting Professional Excellence
- Preparing for the Future

Dear ILA Members and Friends,

I can't believe a year has passed since I assumed the duties of ILA president. Time flies when you are busy and this year has been busy. So I'd like to take a moment to review what we've done and what I've learned in talking with library workers around the state. You also need to know about the exciting plans developed during your board's first strategic planning retreat in ten years.

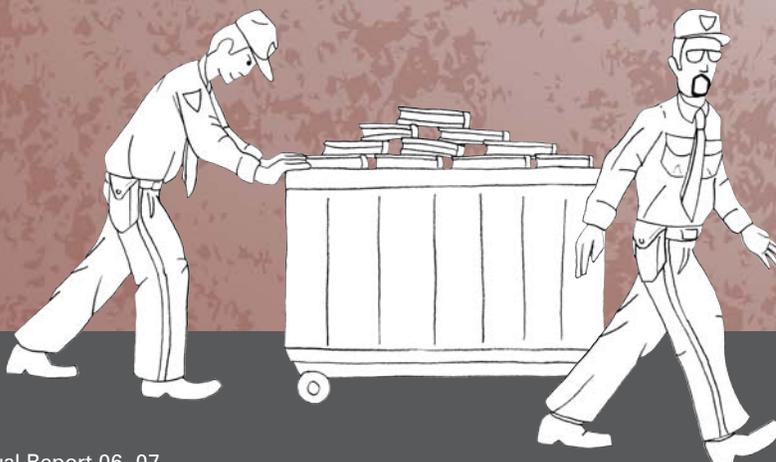
The theme of this year's ILA conference — "Illinois Libraries: Generating Value in Dollars and Sense" — is an apt one, as it mixes both the practical need of libraries to show a return on investment and the ever-increasing demands on librarians to provide visionary leadership both as library leaders and as community leaders.

Managing a library is about far more than keeping the doors open and the shelves filled. It is about gaining a place at the table when communities are planning their development, cultivating relationships with local, state, and federal legislators, and keeping the lines of communication with our customers open so we can stay abreast of their information wants and needs. While we need to keep working for improved — and increased —

lines of funding and common sense solutions to issues such as filtering, we also need to be able to continually assure our relevance to the quickly changing communities we serve.

Libraries in this state span the range from small to extra large, from minuscule materials budgets to budgets in the millions, but all have in common the need to remain relevant to their users and in sync with their funding sources. All across the state, many of our librarians are fast approaching retirement but worry that there is no one to succeed them. And yet again this year, library services were challenged by the filtering issue.

To this end, we hosted more continuing education programs this year than ever before. In the spring, ILA sponsored fourteen workshops across the state, including a series of intellectual freedom workshops, "Defending Access with Confidence," held at eight Illinois library systems. Another first for Illinois was the workshop on the need for leadership succession and retirement planning. This two-day workshop, "Accelerating in the Homestretch," was funded in part by a federal Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant, and jointly hosted by ILA and the Indian Trails Public Library District.



# “Libraries and their collections and services are invaluable assets for developing your community.”

—Tamiye Meehan

Thanks to persistence and a lot of hard work by ILA Executive Director Robert P. Doyle, we also participated in an extraordinary partnership with MySpace to produce more than two million bookmarks, providing information to youth and adults on making safe and informed decisions online. Three different bookmarks — *Dealing with Cyberbullies: Tips for Kids*, *Safe Blogging: Tips for Teens*, and *Social Networking: Tips for Parents* — were produced. One million were distributed to Illinois’s libraries, as well as to local officials. Another million were distributed to every attendee at the 2007 American Library Association Annual Conference in Washington, D.C., and to our national legislators. ILA is continuing its discussion with MySpace and it’s hoped additional useful tools will be developed.

Ensuring the vitality of our association is a critical ingredient in keeping the voice of ILA heard in the state and federal legislatures and in helping libraries plan and prepare for the future. One of the best returns on investment made by ILA is our lobbyist, Kip Kolkmeier, who kept us abreast of ninety-two pending bills affecting libraries. It was a busy year for library legislation, both good and bad. Pages four and five of this report list a few of the key bills.

In addition to maintaining and growing our membership, we embarked this year on a multi-year strategic plan developed under the leadership of incoming ILA president Brad Baker. With the guidance of consultant Dan Wiseman, the board has constructed a strategic plan that provides a great return on the investment of your dues in ILA. The process will need everyone’s attention and help during the next few years, particularly members of the executive board.

I look forward to working with all of you on this plan and on the many issues we will face in the future, but for now I invite you to look through these pages and join the executive board and me in celebrating a very busy 2006–2007 ILA year.

Illinois Libraries: Generating Value in Dollars and Sense!

Tamiye Meehan



ILA President, 2006–2007



## ADVOCATING FOR THE PUBLIC INTEREST: 2006–2007

On April 19, the city of Springfield welcomed 338 library supporters attending the 2007 Illinois Library Day. Sponsored jointly by the Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois (CARLI), Illinois Library Association, Illinois Library Systems Directors Organization (ILSDO), Illinois School Library Media Association (ISLMA), Illinois chapter of the Special Libraries Association, and Illinois State Library, the event drew librarians from all over the state and from all types of libraries.

The delegation met with their legislators and urged them to take the following actions:

Oppose House Bill 1727, Mandatory Internet Computer Filters. As introduced, the bill takes away local control, imposes a costly unfunded mandate, and punishes libraries and librarians with fines and frivolous lawsuits.

Support Senate Bill 186, Library District Working Cash Funds. The bill makes library district funds more consistent with other local governments, updates a reference tying funds to a 1978 equalized assessed valuation (EAV), and clarifies existing provisions.

Support House Bill 2782, Public Library District Annexation. The bill provides additional public notice and an opportunity to comment on proposed annexations.

In May, Illinois again had the largest delegation attending National Library Legislative Day in Washington, D.C., with seventy-six attendees, or 18 percent of the total attendance for the event. In addition, Danny Chapman, a senior honor student at Lake Forest High School and the first winner of the National Library Legislative Day 2007 Student Theme Contest, and his family joined the Illinois delegation.

## LEGISLATIVE SCORECARD

The 2007 spring session of the Illinois General Assembly seemed misnamed, as it stretched well into summer and the fall. The roiling overtime session was dominated by budget discussions. Legislators filed almost 6,000 bills. The Illinois Library Association tracked more than ninety-two bills affecting funding for libraries, intellectual freedom issues, local government operations, and other issues of importance to the library community.

The association's advocacy efforts successfully defeated legislation requiring all Illinois public and school libraries to filter their public computers, and defeated proposed social networking legislation. ILA opposed proposed legislation weakening the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund; and sponsored bills to bring consistency to the management of public library district working cash funds, allow greater transparency in the public library district annexation issues, and allow greater flexibility for minimum signature requirement for a trustee nomination petition. It was an extraordinarily successful spring session in the Illinois General Assembly, where libraries faced many challenges.

Our success is due to the many calls and e-mail messages from the library community, the other coalition members, and the many citizens who shared our concerns. Congratulations and thanks to all!

**Key bills and their disposition are detailed below.**

### **Senate Bill (SB) 1682, Social Networking Prohibition Act, held.**

This bill would have banned or severely limited access to social networking sites, such as MySpace, on library computers. The Illinois Library Association actively opposed this bill, and it died in committee.

**House Bill (HB) 1727, Mandatory Internet Filtering, held.** The bill was passed out of the House on an extremely close vote; in the Senate, it failed to pass out of committee. The Illinois Library Association opposed this bill in coalition with the AIDS Foundation, the American Civil Liberties Union-Illinois, the City of Chicago, the Illinois Municipal League, the Illinois Secretary of State's office, the National Organization for Women, Planned Parenthood, and People for the American Way. It should be noted, however, that HB 1727 still exists and could return in the 2007 Illinois General Assembly Fall Veto Session.

**House Bill (HB) 499, Trustee Petition, passed and signed by governor.**

This bill amends the Illinois Local Library Act by reducing the minimum signature requirement for a nomination petition for the office of library board trustee from 50 to 25. ILA supported this initiative after it was amended to address our concerns.

**House Bill (HB) 2782, Public Library District Annexation, passed and signed by governor.**

An initiative of the Illinois Library Association, this bill requires that the library district shall send notice of an annexation, prior to adopting the ordinance, to be considered by the board of trustees of each public library with service areas within one mile of the territory to be annexed. Within fifteen days of the passage of the annexation ordinance, the library district shall send notice to the president of the board of trustees of each public library with territory within the one-mile radius.

**Senate Bill (SB) 186, Working Cash Funds, passed. Vetoed by**

**governor on August 17. ILA is seeking to override.** An initiative of the Illinois library community, the bill addresses the management of public library district working cash funds by adopting provisions consistent with other units of local government, such as park districts and schools. Public library districts are entitled to establish working cash funds for a period of four tax years, but the tax years need not be consecutive; the establishment of a working cash fund is subject to a back door referendum. The bill updates the annual limit on the maximum size of a working cash fund to 0.2 percent of the 1998 cash value of taxable property; clarifies that interest earned from temporarily idle funds may be transferred to the general fund; and allows library districts to reestablish working cash funds by the same method as originally created, meaning they are subject to a back door rather than a front door referendum.

**House Bill (HB) 237, Library Records Confidentiality Act, passed and signed by governor.**

This bill passed after the ILA Executive Board proposed various changes and adopted a position of neutrality. The changes, originally proposed to draft legislation in 2004, narrowed the scope of the law and gave the library greater discretion in determining how to handle requests for information from law enforcement agencies. In addition, the bill was amended to require that all requests be in writing, be made only after an actual request for a court order has been initiated, and be reviewable by a court after the fact. Further amendments limit the information provided about the identity of the library patron in question, thus reconfirming confidentiality of circulation records. (For further information, see the article "Emergency Exception to the Illinois Library Records Confidentiality Act," by Kiplund Kolkmeier in this issue of the *ILA Reporter*.)

**Senate Bill (SB) 729, College Campus Press Act, passed and signed by governor.**

This bill provides that all campus media produced primarily by students at state-sponsored institutions of higher learning is a public forum for expression by the student journalists and editors at the particular institution. It also provides that campus media, whether campus-sponsored or noncampus-sponsored, is not subject to prior review by public officials of those institutions.

**Senate Bill (SB) 364, Sex Offender Community Notification Law, passed and signed by governor.**

This bill provides that the local law enforcement agencies shall disclose to libraries located within their jurisdictions the name, address, date of birth, place of employment, school attended, and offense or adjudication of all sex offenders and violent offenders against youth required to register in their jurisdictions under the Acts. At the November 2006 ILA Executive Board meeting, the board discussed SB 364 and determined the association should not be opposed to receiving information. The board also determined the following general principle/operating guideline regarding sex offenders and access to libraries: All are welcomed in libraries, but individuals may be excluded based on individual behavior that violates the law or library policies. ILA was neutral on this bill.

**Senate Bill (SB) 417, Elections and Sex Offenders, held.**

This bill would have required sex offenders whose polling place is a library or school to vote by absentee or early voting ballot. ILA successfully sought an amendment to remove libraries from this proposed legislation.

**Senate Bill (SB) 1472, Internet Safety Education Act, passed and signed by governor.**

ILA supported this bill requiring school districts to provide education about Internet threats and risks. The bill creates the Internet Safety Education Alliance under the authority of the Office of the Attorney General and amends the State Finance Act to create the Internet Safety Education Fund. The School Code for the 2008–2009 school year is amended to mandate instruction and discussion on effective methods by which students may recognize and report inappropriate, illegal, or threatening communications on the Internet.

**Senate Bill (SB) 1158, Changes to the Illinois Municipal Retirement Fund, held.**

This bill would have amended the Illinois Pension Code by providing that specified unfunded liabilities of participating municipalities be spread over the remainder of the period allowable under generally accepted accounting principles, except that the employer may provide for a longer period by adopting a resolution or ordinance specifying a forty-year period and submitting a certified copy of the ordinance or resolution to the fund. ILA opposed this bill.

## PROMOTING PROFESSIONAL EXCELLENCE: 2006–2007

The topical theme of the 2006 ILA Annual Conference—"Illinois Libraries: Generating Value in Dollars and Sense"—focused on the practical as well as the visionary in librarianship. Jim Morgenstern of dmA Planning & Management Services and Laurey Gillies of the Southern Ontario Library Service presented the keynote address, "The Library's Contribution to Your Community," which engaged and challenged conference attendees. The conference was held October 3–6 in Chicago.

Other highlights included author/illustrator Eric Rohmann speaking at the Youth Services Breakfast and receptions at the McCormick Tribune Freedom Museum and Mexican Fine Arts Center Museum. The Illinois Authors' Luncheon featuring Audrey Niffenegger, author of *The Time Traveler's Wife*, drew a capacity audience to hear about the book's librarian protagonist and Chicago setting.

ILA members attended over seventy sessions addressing topics from electronic intellectual freedom to serving ethnic populations, from passing your referendum to library professional education. Conference attendance was 2,130, including 368 exhibitor representatives. A special thanks to the many sponsors and donors who made the conference possible, along with the members and visitors from around the world who made it memorable.

Continuing education is a year-round event for the association. Selected examples include:

- From February to May, ILA sponsored fourteen workshops across the state, including a series of intellectual freedom workshops—"Defending Access with Confidence"—held at eight Illinois library systems.
- The Illinois Library Trustee Forum sponsored their annual Spring Workshop at the Hickory Ridge Marriott Conference Hotel in Lisle.
- In April, "Accelerating in the Homestretch" was held at the Starved Rock Lodge and Conference Center. This workshop, designed for library directors planning to retire in the next five to seven years, offered tools to assess their library's current state of health, determine what needs to be done to ensure sustained improvement, and plan for succession management.
- On Friday, May 18, the seventeenth annual Reaching Forward Conference of Library Assistants drew more than 1,000 attendees to the Rosemont Donald E. Stephens Convention Center. Stephen Abram, vice-president of innovation SirsiDynix, presented the keynote address, "Next Generation Libraries: The Social Web 2.0."

In addition to these workshops and conferences, the *ILA Reporter* offers members a bimonthly window to the wider world of librarianship around the state and the nation. This year the *ILA Reporter* received a makeover, based on the fall 2006 member survey. The publication became more colorful, and we hope more practical, inspirational, and filled with ideas. Special inserts in the *ILA Reporter* in 2006–2007 included:

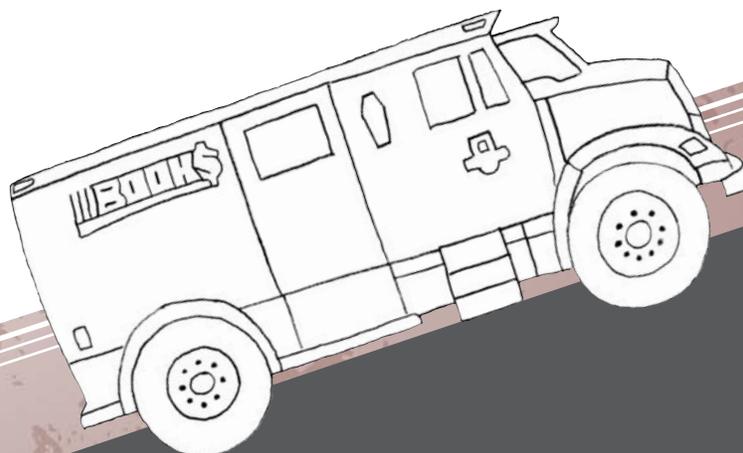
- *Books Challenged or Banned, 2005–2006* (August 2006)
- *2005–2006 ILA Annual Report: Extending Our Reach* (October 2006)
- *2007 ILA Annual Conference Preliminary Program* (June 2007)

Finally, the 2007 iREAD theme, *Mission Read: To the Library and Beyond*, brought Illinois libraries the colorful and imaginative graphics of Caldecott winner Eric Rohmann.

## PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE: 2006–2007

The association ended the fiscal year 2006-2007 with a surplus for the eleventh year in a row. ILA's auditors, Weiss, Sugar, Dvorak & Dusek, Ltd., "commended the executive board and management for an increase in net assets of \$37,199 during 2007. This is an accomplishment to be proud of considering the current economic condition." In addition to sound fiscal management, the executive board believes ILA must continue to diversify income streams in order to maintain the financial health of the organization.

The health of the 2006–2007 financial statement is due to the association's long-term investments. Since 1998, the association has maintained an investment portfolio; some years the portfolio yields little or no gain, depending on our ability to make additional contributions and the valuation of the market. At the end of the fiscal year, the portfolio showed a gain of \$43,322 for a total value of \$304,892 and an increase of 17.36 percent. As we do not budget for a gain, the association's long-term investments made the association's bottom line in 2006–2007 positive.



"commended the executive board and management for an increase in net assets of \$37,199, continuing your remarkable string of ten plus years of net assets growth. This is truly an accomplishment to be proud of considering the current economic condition."

—ILA Auditor

## ILA FISCAL REPORT Year Ended June 30, 2007

### REVENUE

General Operations	\$ 40,749
Membership	\$ 317,411
Directory/Reporter	\$ 22,031
Conference	\$ 354,799
Board	\$ 325
Publications	\$ 18,111
IREAD	\$ 162,526
Public Policy	\$ 5,600
Awards	\$ 2,804
Endowment	\$ 2,597
Workshops/Projects	\$ 34,235
Reaching Forward	\$ 105,347
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>\$ 1,066,535</b>

### EXPENSES

(before allocation of staff salaries, taxes, and benefits to functional areas)

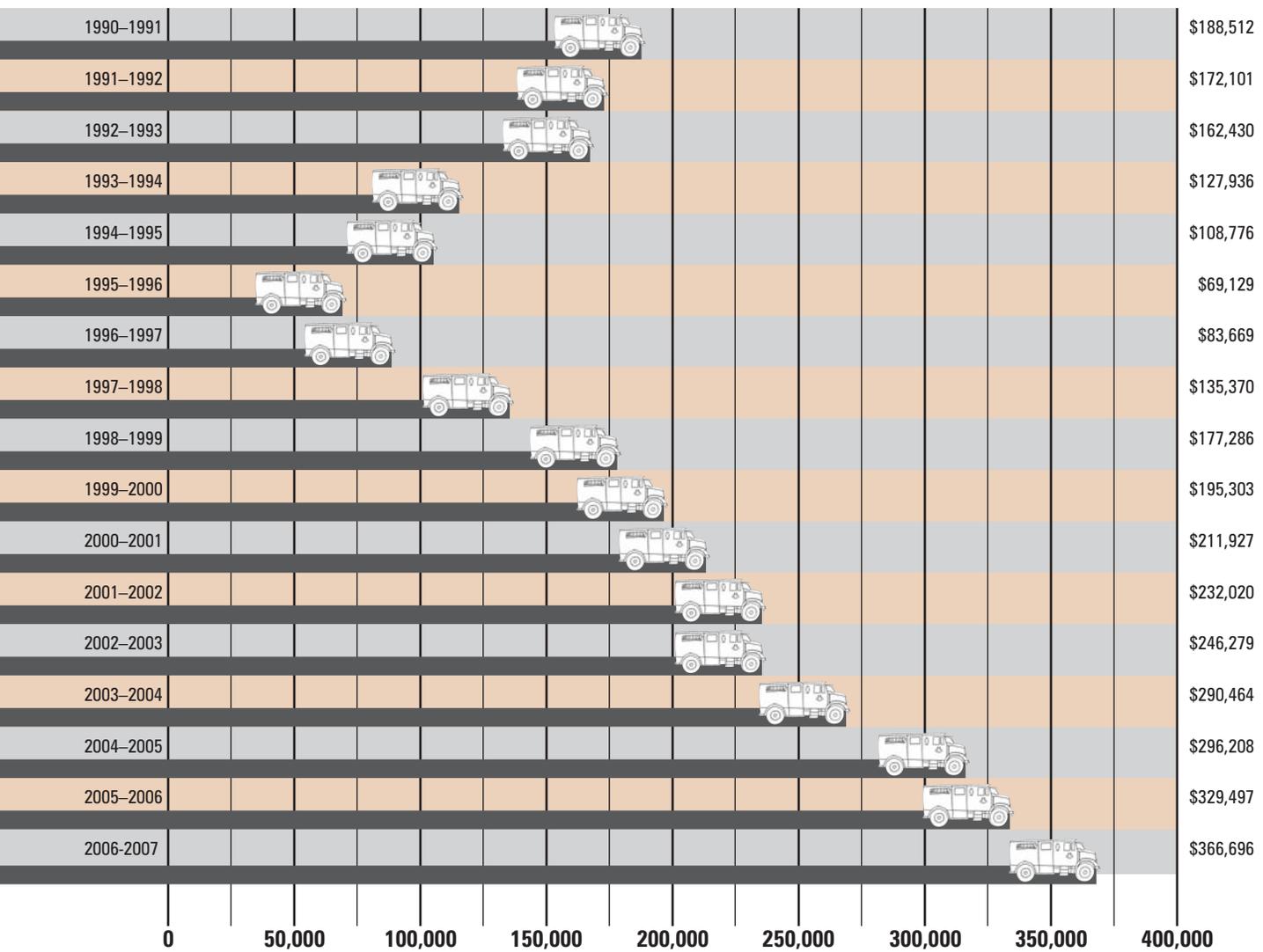
General Operations	\$ 378,900
Membership/Directoy/Reporter	\$ 85,386
Conference	\$ 246,955
Board/Committee	\$ 6,215
Publications	\$ 7,078
IREAD	\$ 149,844
Public Policy	\$ 61,011
Awards	\$ 8,060
Workshops/Projects	\$ 32,579
Professional Development	\$ 1,128
Forums	\$ 753
Reaching Forward	\$ 94,749
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$ 1,072,658</b>
Income/Expenses Before Unrealized Gains	\$ -6,123
Unrealized Gains on Investments	\$ 43,322
Income/Expenses	\$ 37,199
Net Assets at end of FY2006	\$ 329,497
Net Assets at end of FY2007	\$ 366,696

#### Net Assets are Comprised of:

Unrestricted Assets	\$ 318,052
Temporarily Restricted Assets	\$ 31,843
Permanently Restricted Assets	\$ 16,801
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS AT END OF FY 2007</b>	<b>\$ 366,696</b>

- Atkinson Memorial Award (\$3,831)
- Student Librarian Scholarship (\$6,979)
- DeLafayette Reid Fund for Continuing Education (\$4,283)
- Robert R. McClarren Award Fund for Legislative Development (\$1,139)
- Sylvia Murphy Williams Fund (\$8,572)
- Legal Defense Fund (\$555)
- Preiser Award (\$2,500)
- Illinois Library Day (\$3,984)

## HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF NET ASSETS



### CUMULATIVE SURPLUS

After eleven years of expanding services, reduced staffing, and aggressive cost controls, the association has ended the last eleven fiscal years with surpluses totalling \$297,567.

2006-2007	\$ 37,199
2005-2006	\$ 33,289
2004-2005	\$ 5,744
2003-2004	\$ 44,185
2002-2003	\$ 14,259
2001-2002	\$ 20,093
2000-2001	\$ 16,624
1999-2000	\$ 18,017
1998-1999	\$ 41,916
1997-1998	\$ 51,701
1996-1997	\$ 14,540
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 297,567</b>

## MEMBERSHIP

The Illinois Library Association represents all types of libraries — public, school, academic, and special libraries serving government, commerce, the armed services, hospitals, prisons, and other institutions. Its almost 3,000 members are primarily librarians and library staff, but also trustees, publishers, and other supporters.

## ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNANCE

The Illinois Library Association has three full-time staff members. It is governed by a sixteen-member executive board, made up of elected officers. The association employs the services of Kolkmeier Consulting for legislative advocacy. ILA is a 501(c) (3) charitable and educational organization.

## FORUMS

Government Documents Forum  
Illinois Association of College & Research Libraries Forum  
Librarians for Social Responsibility Forum  
Library Trustees Forum  
Public Library Forum  
Reaching Forward: Forum for Library Support Staff  
Reference Services Forum  
Resources and Technical Services Forum  
Young Adult Services Forum  
Youth Services Forum

## STANDING COMMITTEES

Awards Committee  
Best Practices Committee  
Conference Program Committee  
Cultural and Racial Diversity Committee  
Finance Committee  
Fundraising Committee  
Intellectual Freedom Committee  
*ILA Reporter* Advisory Committee  
iREAD Committee  
Marketing Committee  
Membership Committee  
Nominating Committee  
Public Policy Committee

“Nurture the return on investment at your library by investing in tomorrow’s leaders.”

—Tamiye Meehan



## 2006/2007 EXECUTIVE BOARD

### President

Tamiye Meehan, Indian Trails Public Library District

### Vice-President/President-Elect

Brad Baker, Northeastern Illinois University

### Immediate Past President

Dianne C. Harmon, Joliet Public Library

### Treasurer

Charm N. Ruhnke, Lewis & Clark Library System

### Directors

Laura L. Barnes, Illinois Waste Management & Research Center

Dean Bryan, Metropolitan Library System

Jamie Bukovac, Indian Prairie Public Library

Emily Guss, University of Illinois at Chicago

Margaret Ming Heraty, Arlington Heights Memorial Library

Nancy Huntley, Lincoln Library

Richard C. McCarthy, Gail Borden Public Library District

Julie M. Milavec, Plainfield Public Library District

Theodore C. Schwitzner, Illinois State University

Cristy Stupegia, Sparta Public Library

Jocelyn Tipton, Eastern Illinois University

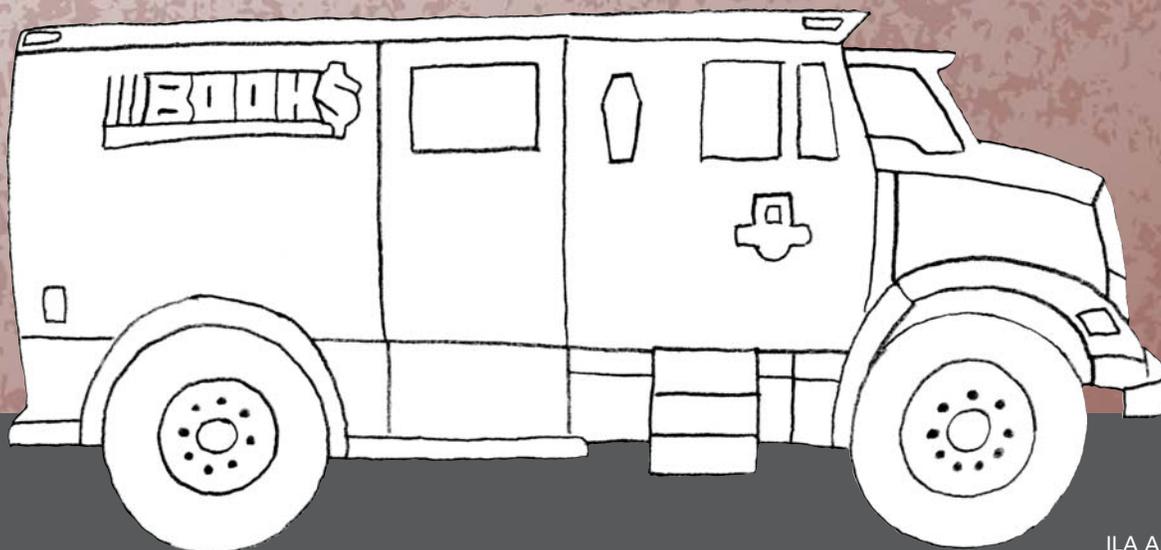
### ALA Councilor

Tina Hubert, Lewis & Clark Library System

### Ex Officio

Robert P. Doyle, Illinois Library Association

Anne B. Craig, Illinois State Library





Robert P. Doyle Illinois Library Association 33 West Grand Avenue, Suite 301 Chicago, IL 60610-4306  
phone: (312) 644-1896 fax: (312) 644-1899 e-mail: [ila@ila.org](mailto:ila@ila.org) <http://www.ila.org>

## OCTOBER 2007

**4-7** Library and Information Technology Association, National Forum, Denver, Colo. For further information, see <http://www.ala.org/lita/>.

**9-12** IIA Annual Conference, Springfield, Ill., at the Prairie Capital Convention Center. Conference Hotels: Abraham Lincoln Hotel and Conference Center, 701 East Adams St., Springfield, IL 62701; phone: (217) 544-8800; fax: (217) 544-8079; single/double: \$97, plus tax. Hilton Springfield, 700 East Adams St., Springfield, IL 62701; phone: (217) 789-1530 or 800-445-8667; fax: (217) 522-5346; single: \$105/double: \$120, plus tax.

**14-20** Teen Read Week. For further information, see <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/>.

**19** 17th Annual Mortenson Distinguished Lecture, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, Room 126, featuring Clara Budnik, Fundación Democracia y Desarrollo, Chile, "The Enchanted Libraries of Chile: A Story of Transformation." A reception will follow.

**20** Deadline for December issue of the *IIA Reporter*.

**25-26** Health Science Librarians of Illinois Annual Conference, Urbana, Ill. For further information, see <http://hsli.org/Conference/>.

**25-28** American Association of School Librarians National Conference, Reno, Nev. For further information, see <http://www.ala.org/aasl/>.

## NOVEMBER 2007

**1-3** Illinois School Library Media Association Annual Conference, Crowne Plaza, Springfield, Ill. For further information, see <http://www.islma.org/>.

**2** iREAD meeting, 11:00 A.M., Reddick Library, 1010 Canal St., Ottawa, IL 61350; phone: (815) 434-0509.

**16** IIA Executive Board meeting, 10:00 A.M., Rolling Prairie Library System, 345 W. Eldorado St., Decatur, IL 62522-2114; phone: (217) 429-2586; fax: (217) 428-1852.

## DECEMBER 2007

**20** Deadline for February issue of the *IIA Reporter*.



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Director of Marketing  
[dphillips@speerfinancial.com](mailto:dphillips@speerfinancial.com)

## JANUARY 2008

**11-16** ALA Midwinter Meeting,  
Philadelphia, Pa.;  
phone: (312) 280-3225;  
<http://www.ala.org/>.

## FEBRUARY 2008

**15** iREAD meeting, 11:00 A.M.,  
Reddick Library, 1010 Canal  
St., Ottawa, IL 61350;  
phone: (815) 434-0509.

**20** Deadline for April issue of the  
*ILA Reporter*.

**22** ILA Executive Board meeting,  
10:00 A.M., Prairie Area Library  
System, 405 Earl Rd.,  
Shorewood, IL 60431-9445;  
phone: (815) 229-2710;  
fax: (815) 725-0930.

**23** Trustee Forum Workshop,  
Hickory Ridge Marriott  
Conference Hotel,  
1195 Summerhill Dr.,  
Lisle, IL 60532. Individual  
attendees will make reservations  
for the event directly with  
Marriott Reservations at  
800-334-0344. If the individual  
attendee does not check in, there

will be a charge of one night's  
room rate. Registration form  
will be in the December 2007  
issue of the *ILA Reporter*.

## MARCH 2008

**25-29** Public Library Association's  
Thirteenth National  
Conference, Minneapolis,  
Minn.; phone: 800-545-2433,  
ext. 5PLA; e-mail: [pla@ala.org/](mailto:pla@ala.org/).

## APRIL 2008

**13-19** National Library Week. Contact  
ALA Public Information Office,  
phone: 800-545-2433,  
ext. 5044/5041;  
fax: (312) 944-8520;  
e-mail: [pio@ala.org](mailto:pio@ala.org/);  
<http://www.ala.org/>.

**14-20** Young People's Poetry Week,  
sponsored by the Children's  
Book Council, highlights poetry  
for children and young adults  
and encourages everyone to  
celebrate poetry. For more  
information, contact the  
Children's Book Council,  
12 W. 37th St., 2nd Fl.,  
New York, NY 10018;  
phone: (212) 966-1990;  
<http://www.cbcbooks.org/>.

**20** Deadline for June issue of the  
*ILA Reporter*.

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# The Color of Diversity

**D**uring my career I've had the wonderful opportunity to work in some of this country's most ethnically diverse cities. Due to historical immigration patterns, each city has its own cultural flavor and its own "color" that changes with every new wave of newcomers.

Even though I am a native Chicagoan, I have spent the majority of my career working as a librarian in California. My first job was with the San Diego Public Library and the cultural influences there are distinctly Mexican. The juxtaposition of the golden-brown, Mediterranean landscape, with the vibrant blues of the Pacific Ocean, created a sharp contrast which, in the late seventies, was not unlike the local social patterns of the time. My job was to build bridges between the two.

Oakland (my first job as a library director), is an African American city. It boasts being home to one of the largest African American middle class communities in the nation. I always thought of Oakland as the emerald city. The Oakland Hills (remember the fire?) are, by and large, very green year round. Homeowners in the hills tend to be better off financially than those who live in the "flatlands" of Oakland.

The library had been a pioneer in the creation of "ethnic" branch libraries. When I arrived in 1990, the Latin American Library, a specialized branch with one of the largest Spanish-language popular collections in the nation, was approaching its twenty-year anniversary. The Asian Library, with specialized collections in Chinese, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese, was not far behind.

Ironically, Oakland didn't have a branch dedicated to the African American community. During my tenure, we established the African American Museum and Library at Oakland, a joint venture between the Oakland Public Library and the Northern California Center for African American History and Life.

Brooklyn is the most populous of New York City's five boroughs. Having lived most of my adult life in California, I thought I was fairly well versed in the politics and social dynamics of ethnic communities, but New York City proved that I was not. Over 2.6 million people live in Brooklyn. Brooklyn is everything. It is old European and home to turn of the century migration from countries such as Italy (Dyker Heights) and Holland (Gravesend). Newer migration patterns from Russia (Brighton Beach), as well as Haiti, Trinidad, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, and scores of other Caribbean communities gave me a much greater awareness for the multi-banded rainbow of life in New York City. It also gave us the opportunity to establish the Multicultural Center in the Main Library of Brooklyn Public Library, a "one-stop" center that offers a variety of programs and collections in languages other than English.

One can't ignore the influence of religion on everyday life in New York City. Religion is the cream on top of the national pride that overflows in Brooklyn neighborhoods. With help from many, I had to quickly learn new lessons about the significance of the Judaic calendar on branch staffing schedules as well as the importance of Islamic mullahs as spiritual anchors within the community. When I was referred to as a "mench" by one of our local city council members, I knew that I had gained his acceptance.

All of these experiences have made me a richer person and given me new insights into the role public libraries play by supporting diverse neighborhoods and making our cities stronger, making our communities more vibrant and culturally colorful, and, most importantly, as a source of pride for the people who live there. For me, each city was a challenge that required me to find a new set of advisers, be they library staff, from the neighborhood, or among the many community leaders who were only too eager to make me an honorary part of their rich heritage.

Wherever I've worked I've tried to understand the color of the community. This color is the essence that makes each city unique. At the root of it all, I wanted to be the "mench"—I wanted to know that people could rely on me to make sure that I had their best interests in mind. I would not have been successful if I hadn't made the effort to try to learn a little about everyone who lived in the communities I served. In the process, I'd like to think that I've also learned a little about myself. **ILA**



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