

ILLINOIS Libraries

December 2005 — Springfield, Illinois — Vol. 86 No. 1

SPECIAL ISSUE

ILLINOIS REGIONAL
LIBRARY SYSTEMS



Past ❖ *Present* ❖ *Future*

ILLINOIS Libraries

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Illinois Libraries is the official journal of the Illinois State Library. The purpose of *Illinois Libraries* is to disseminate articles of general interest to library staff and library governing officials in Illinois who represent all types of libraries and library consortia. Every effort is made to provide a balanced treatment of library-related issues.

Articles are solicited that will address the interests of the publication's audience. Individuals also are encouraged to submit unsolicited articles for consideration. Articles are not limited to Illinois contributors, and guidelines for manuscript submission are available upon request. *Illinois Libraries* will not compensate authors for submitted or requested articles. The editor and/or director of the Illinois State Library has the right to reject and/or edit articles before printing. Edited manuscripts and/or galley proofs cannot be sent to individuals for approval.

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Dear Friends:

I am pleased to present this special issue of *Illinois Libraries* commemorating the 40th anniversary of the creation of regional library systems in Illinois.



The Illinois State Library is very proud of its long, strong partnership with library systems and its record of accomplishments in maintaining our libraries as the best, most reliable sources of information available to the citizens of Illinois. Support for our regional library systems is provided through the Secretary of State's office with funds appropriated by the Illinois General Assembly. About 2,500 academic, public, school and special libraries are served by Illinois' nine regional library systems located throughout the state.

This special issue of *Illinois Libraries* traces the history of library systems from their creation in 1965 through such major achievements as the development of multitype systems. Several of the original library system directors have been kind enough to share their memories. Current State Library Director Anne Craig and her two predecessors, Jean Wilkins and Bridget Lamont, offer their recollections and thoughts on the future of systems. Librarians who have benefited from the services offered by library systems share their thoughts on what library systems mean to them. And the history and major achievements of each current library system is highlighted, showing how 18 original systems in 1965 have merged over the years into today's nine highly effective advocates for the library community.

Our library systems have evolved and strengthened over the past 40 years and are poised to achieve great things in the years to come. As State Librarian, I look forward to continuing the strong working relationship with our regional library systems to help fulfill their mission of promoting a future where seamless library service is easily available to Illinois residents anytime, anywhere, and assisting libraries of all types to be relevant to the communities they serve. Congratulations on reaching this important milestone.

Jesse White

Jesse White
Secretary of State & State Librarian

ILLINOIS Libraries

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Length — Articles should be no less than five and no more than 20 double-spaced, typewritten pages on white 8 1/2" x 11" paper.

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Preface

Context is important. If you didn't know, you might think that regional library systems began on Aug. 17, 1965, when the Illinois Library System Act became law. Actually the impetus for systems began in Illinois and in other parts of the country 40 years earlier as a response to larger societal trends for regionalism, assistance to rural areas and a broader federal role in all types of activities. By the mid 1960s these trends resulted in regional library systems, sometimes called cooperatives or networks, being established in about half of our 50 states. In the intervening years, some states never established systems. Some that had them disbanded them. In all cases where systems have existed they also have changed, often dramatically.

Illinois' regional library systems always had one big competitive advantage — autonomy. From the beginning systems had their own funding source direct through the Illinois State Library. Additionally the law provided for independent system boards with the power to develop and amend bylaws, manage their own expenditures, make and carry out policy, purchase or lease property, borrow money, hire a director, etc. This autonomy, even in the beginning, put member libraries in the driver's seat. As a result, systems in Illinois differ, often markedly from each other, largely because of the differences in member libraries.

As you read the first section — The Past — particularly note the descriptions in the Rohlf and Halcli articles from 1990 that describe Illinois libraries before systems. One can only imagine the state of libraries in Illinois in 2005 if systems had not been created.

Our goal in putting together this collection of articles was to not only celebrate and document 40 years of regional library systems in Illinois, but also to ask, what comes next? In the Present and Future sections, you will read a range of snapshots and reports on what exists today, while getting a glimpse at some possible futures. As you think about the future for libraries and systems, think about the larger societal context. Technology has irrevocably changed everyday life in America. For the first time ever we read about public libraries closing. On the other hand, Americans long for community and view the library as a commons or meeting space, whether it is in an academic, public, school or special library setting. Funding for libraries and systems has been and continues to be a big issue. But new sources of revenue are being found and put into place to bolster both libraries and systems. As one who has been a librarian for not

quite 40 years, and a system director in Illinois for only 16 years, I believe libraries and systems in Illinois have a future now more than ever.

Sarah Long

Working on this special issue of *Illinois Libraries* has been a rewarding experience. It was an opportunity to take the time to reflect on the value of library cooperation in Illinois. Sometimes, in the rush of business, we take this 40-year tradition of cooperation for granted. Reading these contributions of past and current library system and Illinois State Library leaders reminds us of the many noteworthy programs of library systems and their achievements in providing access to information.

Times have changed greatly since 1965 and the birth of library systems. Information is delivered more quickly and in ways we could not imagine when the library system legislation was signed. Despite changing technologies, a common theme throughout the years has been the steadfast commitment by the Illinois library community towards library cooperation. Congratulations on 40 years!

Kathleen Bloomberg

Sarah Long, Kathleen Bloomberg and I had our first meeting to begin planning this special issue back in July. Their wealth of ideas, tremendous institutional knowledge, constant enthusiasm and hard work were the ingredients that resulted in a document that we hope will be both enjoyable to read and serve as a source for research and information in the years to come.

Thanks to all of our system directors and their outstanding staffs for taking time out of their busy schedules to conduct the research and write many of these articles.

Several of our authors interrupted their well-deserved retirements to pry open their memory banks and offer their thoughts on important developments that have occurred over these first 40 years. Their recollections and remembrances are wonderfully illuminating, sometimes humorous, extremely instructive and very much appreciated.

In looking to the future of library systems, we thought it vital to have an out-of-state perspective. Thanks to our authors from outside Illinois who weighed in with some enlightening prognostications.

Here's hoping the next 40 years of regional library systems are as rich, rewarding and remarkable as the first four decades.

Patrick McGuckin

THE PAST

The first three articles in this special issue have been reprinted from an issue of Illinois Libraries (Volume 72, No.3) published in March 1990 to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the creation of Illinois' regional library systems.

Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of Illinois State Library Systems, 1990

Dreams and Expectations: The Development of the System Plan

by Robert H. Rohlf

(At the time of the article, Robert H. Rohlf was director of Hennepin County Library, Minnetonka, Minnesota.)

In 1963 I took a leave of absence from my position as director of the Dakota-Scott Regional Library System in Minnesota to undertake a study for the Illinois Library Association. That study produced "A Plan for Public Library Development in Illinois" and what in later years has simply become known as the "Illinois System Plan." From that plan Illinois library laws were changed, library systems were developed and library service in Illinois changed drastically. How these changes came about is detailed in other articles in this issue and I will not repeat those activities. What were the issues however that led to the need for a statewide plan? What was the public library situation in Illinois in 1963? What was public library service and organization like and what problems were apparent and developing?

In the brief space allocated to this article on the genesis of Illinois library system let me quote from the original 1963 report to depict the overall public library scene in Illinois at that time.¹

Illinois library laws "...are contradictory, vague regarding powers of library boards, actually discourage formation of larger library units in that permissive tax rates are lower for district libraries than for individual city or village libraries and representation on the library board is not uniform" (p. 10).

Population served: "As the population of Illinois has risen, the number of libraries has risen even faster. Yet, despite the increase in the number of libraries, there are more people in Illinois without local library service than there were fifteen years ago – almost one million more in fact" (p.11).

Student use: "... a vast number of students attend schools in a consolidated district school whose taxing unit is much larger geographically than the single city or village taxing unit of the community library . . . the public libraries located in the larger cities or towns of the school district are besieged by students who, while attending the school in their community, are legally nonresidents as far as the library tax unit is concerned ... students ... seem to feel that it is their right to use the library services free regardless of whether or not they actually are residents within the library tax area; their parents also assume this right, and often complain bitterly about paying a nonresident fee for library use" (p.11).

Reference service: "It is in the reference service which a library renders to its public that the library stands unique. No paperback stocked bookstore, magazine dealer, or television program can offer this reference service. Yet it is this same reference service which is the costliest part of a good library's operation ... [which] is that aspect which the library finds harder and harder to finance and more difficult to control with the hordes of nonresidents using the library" (p.11).

One of the most pressing problems exacerbating the issues above was the problem of too many separate public libraries servicing too few people. In 1963 there were 521 totally independent, non-related, non-connected, individual public libraries in Illinois. There were no systems, no contracts, and no reciprocity of use. While public libraries had increased in number by 30 percent in the preceding fifteen

years, the average number of people each library service had decreased by 12 percent and yet there were still 2,500,000 people in the state with no library service and another 1,500,000 with substandard or barely marginal service.

In commenting on some of these concerns, the 1963 report stated, “This large number of public libraries serving only 8,502 people (excluding Chicago) on the average results in large duplication in cataloging costs, reference book costs, special periodical costs, etc... Larger units of library service, either consolidated or cooperative, by using greater resources can provide more adequate services, far greater range of materials on any subject, audiovisual materials, bookmobiles and the other services associated with modern library services without the high taxes involved in smaller individual libraries attempting to provide these same services” (pp.11-12).

Library cooperation in the state was virtually nonexistent. The report stated, “Another grave problem facing Illinois is the past failure – unique in its region with perhaps, Indiana – of its libraries to enter into any large scale cooperative plans for library service ... Illinois has no successful history of worthwhile cooperation. Each library has gone its own way with little or no attempt to do things with its neighbor. Some of this past failure must be attributed to the state library laws, which actually discourage, if not prohibit for practical purposes, library cooperation. Some of the failure must be attributed to the fear of loss of control over services by many library boards and city councils. Most of this failure to attempt cooperative ventures however must be attributed to lack of leadership by the librarians themselves ...” (p.18).

The state library was also considered remiss (it seems state libraries are always being blamed for one thing or another) in its lack of leadership and planning. The report states, “Of grave concern to many librarians and boards throughout Illinois is the lack of a state sponsored long-range, wide scope plan for library development. ... The state must adopt a uniform, consistent, long-range policy for the development of strong library service units or it will eventually find that its smaller public libraries will either collapse or will have to be supported by the state directly” (p.18).

In summary therefore the 1963 public library situation was viewed as needing significant change to develop mechanisms: to provide public library service to all residents of the state; develop interlibrary cooperative services and programs to end or at least drastically minimize the nonresident user problem (and the nontaxed library user); develop a consistent statewide long-range plan for public library development; provide statewide funding to establish minimum uniform levels of library service and statewide public access; stop the proliferation of small, non-connected, inefficient libraries in developing urban fringe areas; and, establish statewide interlocking yet independent library systems based on large geographic areas – a radical change from the 1963 public library situation in Illinois.

The major thrust of the report was the recommendation of several levels of state funding and the establishment of cooperative or federated library systems. The report also suggested two other new developments, the financing of four reference centers and the creation of a Union Catalog and a Union List of Serials held by selected Illinois libraries.

Before discussing the system recommendations in more detail it must be frankly stated that political considerations aimed at securing favorable legislation attention was obviously a factor in recommending direct state aid payments of an equalizing value to all “qualifying local libraries” and the need for four reference centers (when two or three would have sufficed). The equalization aid was meant to merely establish a floor for poorer libraries and not meant to be a direct state aid to everyone. It was also meant to attract political support for statewide library funding from poorer areas.

The reference center concept was appropriate but the actual number of centers needed was always a political issue. The base was to be the Illinois State Library and the University of Illinois, both already funded (but for different reasons) by the state. The other two became the Chicago Public Library (largest public library collection and without state funds) and the then rapidly developing Southern Illinois University Library. Thus both geography and rivalry were served.

The real success of the plan and the massive improvement in public library service in Illinois in the years since was the establishment of the systems and their funding at the state level. The number of systems was always an issue and the original number recommended was based on political reality with the strong hope and belief that the number would be reduced as the years went by. The plan stated, "Any proposal at this time for the number and areas to be served by the proposed library systems is of necessity tentative and meant only as a guideline to the local libraries and to the State Library Advisory Committee which under the proposal of this plan will initiate, guide, and approve respectively the final systems which will result from the adoption of this plan... There are recommended at this time twenty-one systems to cover the entire state. It would be hoped that as the plan is fulfilled, areas will merge or intersystem contracts will reduce this number. It must be repeated that this list is meant solely for guidance. Local conditions and desires must form the actual system areas and boundaries as long as the integrity of the system scheme is retained and certain areas desiring inclusion are not left out of any system altogether. For reasons of computation, all suggested systems boundaries (excluding Cook County) follow county lines" (p.25).

The plan went on to say that, "Any legislation drawn for this plan should include provision for intersystem contracts and every system board should give a great deal of thought and attention to system cooperative services and contracts" (p.25).

As stated above, other articles in this issue deal with the political implementation of the basic recommendations, the establishment of the systems and their early years and development, but what of the hopes of those who worked so hard to get it all started? The fabric of the fourfold set of recommendations was strongly threaded with political strands. By blanketing the state with systems (and keeping them smaller than would be the theoretically ideal) statewide support should be expected. By developing an equalizing per capita grant to local libraries some local fear and animosity was hoped to be minimized. Besides equalization is a fair concept in public funding in the U.S.

Looking at the present (and not dealing with the recent system study) I can ask why the systems haven't merged and consolidated into fewer but stronger units. I can also wonder why local public library service is still developing such small-scale units and why larger units haven't emerged. After all, Illinois has a district library law, which is the envy of many states. I can certainly applaud the development of the multitype systems – at the time of the 1963 study that would have been considered beyond expectation.

There are still far too many public library units in Illinois, even in the larger population areas, and the systems do not seem to have slowed that trend down even while they were serving them all together. Some systems have developed strongly and professionally and others seem to be performing at a level only barely above that when they were first formed. The state has often proclaimed rules, standards, requirements, etc., but through legislative restraint, political realities, or too diffuse a program the state has not played as strong a role as it should in strengthening, developing, and in some cases policing system programs and development. Above all, it is time for more system consolidation.

It is also time for this generation of librarians, trustees, and citizens to explore new roles, develop new patterns, and establish better and more efficient and effective ways to provide library service. Twenty-

five years ago the efforts of many visionary, dedicated, selfless library leaders and trustees pushed Illinois out of the provincial, restrictive, noncooperative, inefficient, protectionism library policies, and restrictive services of the 1950s and 1960s. It is time for another major move forward.

1. Robert H. Rohlf. A Plan for the Public Library Development in Illinois. Illinois Library Association, Aurora, Illinois, 1963. Page references are to the original publication to the committee. Various reprints have different paging.

25 Years of Library Systems in Illinois

by Albert Halcli

(At the time of the article, Albert Halcli was a consultant for library systems, Illinois State Library, Springfield.)

The year 1965 is the watershed in the history of state involvement in library development in Illinois. It was the year in which the Illinois Library System Act was passed. The history of the Illinois State Library and the programs it has sponsored shows how epochal the year 1965 really was. The State Library has always played an important role in library development in this century, but its success has not been uniform. From the 1920s to 1965 its large-scale strategies to extend library service to the unserved and to provide financial aid to libraries either failed in their purpose or were not enacted into legislation. Prior to 1965 its history was checkered with grand designs, and usually, by equally grand failures.

Before the Act

In the 1920s the Illinois State Library promoted county libraries with great fervor¹ and after 1929 it pressed for contracts for service among libraries.² There was appropriate legislation for both programs. Though a few successes were scored neither program had much impact on total library development. In the 1930s library leaders developed a comprehensive strategy by combining the concept of universal library service and regional library service. The idea was intrinsically interesting, though it led to failure.

The first bill for this purpose was drafted in 1935. It would have provided \$.25 per capita for the establishment of regional and universal library service. The state was to be divided into thirty regions. An existing library within each region would be designated as a regional headquarters to distribute materials to deposit stations in unserved areas, such as schools, stores, and post offices. The headquarters library would also supplement the collections of local libraries. Any library loaning materials to nonresidents would be reimbursed.³ The bill failed to pass but a companion Library Relief Bill did become law. It set up a two-year program to provide state grants to public libraries for the purchase of library materials.⁴ This was the first state aid program in Illinois but it was temporary in its scope.

In 1937 state aid to existing public libraries was combined with state aid to extend library service to the unserved. A bill was submitted in 1937, and another in 1939 and 1941. The 1939 bill came within a whisker of being enacted. It passed both houses of the General Assembly with only one dissenting vote, only to be met with an unexpected veto. Governor Henry Horner did not wish to depart from "The tradition that library service is a local responsibility."⁵ As it turned out this "tradition" became entrenched and permanent state aid to libraries ceased to be an option for a full generation.

Though the program for state financial aid was dead the State Library kept the faith on the concept of regional library service, though the concept was never much more than a theory. In 1940 the State Library announced a Regional Library plan.⁶ The state was to be divided into six regions, within which the State Library would promote library cooperation. The regions were actually established by law in 1939 and remain part of the State Library Act to this day.⁷ The State Library referred to this "plan" periodically but it was never more than a general geographical framework. The regions had no organization but their existence kept alive the concept of regional library service.

The Postwar Era

In the late 1940s and the 1950s efforts to provide financial aid to existing libraries were abandoned and attention was concentrated on extending service to the unserved. The strategy was to promote large-scale library districts. In 1943 the Public Library District Act was adopted and provided for the creation of library districts covering up to five counties. The large geographic scale was fundamental in the

minds of the promoters of library districts. In 1945 the Illinois General Assembly provided for a program of District Library Service Demonstrations. State funds were provided for demonstrations of library service on a large geographic scale in unserved areas of the state. It was assumed that library districts would then be created.

State leaders were unduly optimistic about the possibilities of the program. Some felt that a new era was beginning in library development. Secretary of State and State Librarian Edward Barrett declared, “the nation is watching the Illinois program.”⁸ The high hopes were never realized. From 1945 to 1949 projects were initiated in twenty-one counties. These were either terminated due to lack of local interest or failed at the polls. In the end three small library districts were formed.⁹ The success of these projects would have required that rural people accept large-scale units of service, and of course, the necessary taxation. The voting results showed that library planners were too far ahead of public desires. They assumed a degree of forward looking thinking and high library motivation in areas where such attitudes were unlikely to be found.

After the failure of the demonstration projects the State Library in the early 1950s began establishing Regional Library Service Centers in various sections of the state. The centers were located in existing libraries and provided consultant service and supplemental loans to libraries. In theory the centers were designed to be cooperative ventures and to promote library cooperation. The first centers were established in 1952. By 1960 most of them were phased out. None of them achieved any lasting results in larger units of service.¹⁰

The passage of the federal Library Services Act in 1956 stimulated library development in Illinois as in the nation, but its immediate effect was to reinforce some of the postwar attitudes. The Act emphasized the development of rural libraries and service to the unserved. It thereby encouraged the state to make one last great effort to create large-scale library districts. During the last 1950s the State Library established five major projects to create large area units of service. All but one of them – the Henderson County Public Library District – failed in a series of electoral defeats 1959-1961.¹¹ A research project sponsored by the State Library confirmed what the election results showed – rural people were not ready to support large-scale units of service nor eager to tax themselves for library service.¹²

Forging the System Act

In the 1960s library leaders in Illinois abandoned the strategy of large-scale projects to extend library service to the unserved and recognized that the major challenge of library development was to improve existing library service. The vision that given a proper education, public relations and adequate demonstrations of service the masses of the unserved would be ready to tax themselves was dispelled. The vision of regional library service was disentangled from the question of the unserved and was, instead linked to the improvement of library service. Thus the foundation was laid for the Illinois Library System Act.

The approach to the Illinois Library System Act was very carefully orchestrated. In February 1962, the Illinois Library Association appointed an ad hoc Library Development Committee. This committee under the chairmanship of William Bryan (director, Peoria Public Library) recommended that Robert Rohlf of Minnesota be employed as a consultant to formulate a plan for the establishment of larger units of service in the state.¹³ ILA adopted the project plan in March of 1963 and Robert Rohlf was employed in September of the same year. Rohlf spent ten months traveling in Illinois, visiting a thousand libraries. He presented his carefully reasoned report to the Illinois Library Association in October of 1963.¹⁴

In his report, Rohlf was brutally frank. “Illinois has no successful history of worthwhile cooperation.”

Far from being a leader in this respect Illinois was a backward state. State laws tended to hinder or discourage cooperation and there was not a statewide plan for library development. The solution was to establish library systems in the state.¹⁵ The recommendations were as follows:

Summary of the Plan for Public Library Development in Illinois

This plan recommends a four-part program for public library service in Illinois. It delegates to the state the responsibility of ensuring that all of its citizens have equal access to at least a minimum level of library service and assigns to the state the financial responsibility of ensuring that minimum level of library access.

The four basic recommendations of this program are:

1. A state financed program of equalization aid to qualifying local Public libraries which make a reasonable local tax effort to support a public library but whose financial resources are too limited to provide at least a minimum level of library service.
2. The creation and financing of a network of locally created and governed library systems serving participating local libraries in a system area of at least 150,000 people or 4,000 square miles. In all, twenty-one systems are proposed, and suggested areas are recommended for each system.
3. State financial support is recommended for the establishment of four reference centers in already existing Illinois research libraries. This state support would allow all local libraries access to specialize resource collections and would enable the four resource centers to develop superior collections of reference materials needed by all citizens within the state.
4. Creation of a Union Catalog and of a Union List of Serials for materials held by a selected list of Illinois libraries, public, academic, and special.

The careful planning that was shown in the development of the plan for systems carried over into the campaign to secure legislative support. See the articles in this issue of *Illinois Libraries* by Lester Stoffel and Robert Rohlf. After four years of intense effort the Illinois Library System Act became law on August 17, 1965.

The System Act authorized the creation of a network of public library systems. Its larger achievement was to commit the state to financial support of libraries and permanently involved it in goals for library development. It set broad objectives for the improvement of library service, which defined, at least in a general way, minimum levels of service every resident had a right to expect from a public library. It did not provide a detailed plan for development. It did provide a legal vehicle for library development, a framework within which development could be planned and coordinated. This was the permanent contribution of the Act to Illinois libraries. Before 1965 the library community was fragmented and individualistic. Since 1965 it has had a clear organization and a common set of objectives to serve the needs of the state.

The Act authorized the creation of three types of systems:

- a) A cooperative library system in which two or more public libraries enter into a written agreement to provide any or all library services on a cooperative basis.
- b) A consolidated library system in which two or more public libraries consolidate to form a single library.

- c) A library system consisting of a single public library serving a city of over 500,000 population.

(Illinois Revised Statutes, 1967, Chap. 81, Par. 112)

It provided state funding for the systems through a per capita grant of \$.40 and an area grant of \$15 per square mile. Eighteen systems were formed, seventeen cooperative library systems and one public library system, the Chicago Public Library System. No consolidated systems have been created. New systems had to submit to the State Library for approval a set of bylaws and a “plan of service describing the specific purposes for which the system is formed and the means by which such purposes are to be accomplished.” (Par. 114).

The law did not specify how any system must actually operate. It allowed each system complete freedom to adopt a plan of services and operations to the needs of its own members. In the beginning several of the systems in the northern part of the state entered into a contract with a large library within the system for interlibrary loan and reference service to the other members, while the southern systems established their own library facilities with a building, staff, and collection to serve the member libraries. Eventually all the systems (except Chicago) had their own building, though a few of them still contract with a member library for some service.

The Impact of Library Systems

In the last twenty-five years there has been an undoubted surge in the quality of library service available in communities throughout Illinois. Some aspects of this dramatic improvement in quality can be documented by quantitative data. Total public library circulation rose from 38,857,000 in 1965 to 65,369,000 in 1988 an increase of 40 percent. At the same time, per capita circulation rose from 4.8 per person to 6.5. There are not convenient data to show the other aspects of improvement in quality, but the improvement is evident at the local level. The range of library materials in subject matter and format has increased, and there has been an upgrading in the training skills of library personnel. At the same time, the response time for getting materials to people has improved and there has been a notable increase in accessibility of materials in terms of interlibrary loan, library hours open, and improved physical facilities. The result has been better library service for users.

Underlying these improvements there has been a significant increase in community commitment to the financial support of public libraries on the local level. In 1970 the maximum allowable tax rate for library service without a referendum was raised from .0012 percent of the assessed valuation of taxable property, to .0015 percent. In 1971 93.5 percent of all public libraries were taxing below the maximum rate. By 1988 the percentage had dropped to 22.6 percent. This change has been an index to the changing public attitude toward libraries. Though libraries have always been honored like apple pie and motherhood, this reverence has not always been based on clear concepts of quality. In the last decade and a half most libraries, even small ones have been swept by the winds of change resulting from the increased demand for information and the realization that quality library service costs money. The result has been a greater willingness on the part of the public to support quality with their tax dollars.

Library users have certainly been aware of these changes. It is ironic, though, that they are often only vaguely aware of a very important element in this enlargement of service – the library systems. Throughout Illinois the importance of library service has been due to library boards, staff, and the taxpaying public whose leadership and commitment have made progress possible. But there remains the “rest of the story.” Behind many of the developments that have been cited lay an effort at the systems level to support or motivate which was vital in bringing about the desired results. Library systems have

been a catalyst for library development on the local level. By providing a regional policy making and coordinating body, a source of staff expertise beyond the local level, and supplemental resources of various kinds, the systems have spurred cooperation and provided a trigger mechanism for resource sharing. They have been a mobilizing force and a power to enlarge the horizons of local libraries with new concepts of library service.

The library systems have done the job they were intended to do. They have been anything but static in their operation since their first establishment. Until 1970 they grew and served their members according to the original plans and expectations. After 1970 new forces began to churn the library world, and the systems were affected in their turn. They began a series of changes and adaptations that have gradually transformed them and given them a new character.

Multitype Systems

The systems as originally established were public library systems. This was in accord with the library network theory prevalent in the 1950s and 1960s. The expectation was that separate networks would be established for the different types of libraries: public, school, academic, and special. Once the single type systems had been established, the thinking went, methods of intersystem cooperation would be worked out. By the 1970s it was apparent that the single type approach would be too cumbersome, and might take many years to accomplish the aim of cooperation among all types of libraries. A new idea for library systems was put forth – the multitype system, a single system embracing all types of libraries.

Not long after the systems were formed, it was realized that public library cooperation was not enough to fill all needs of state residents. Though the systems, supported by the Research and Reference Center, made tremendous resources available to every resident, there were untapped riches in academic and special libraries that could be brought to bear in meeting the needs of all. It was also evident that school libraries were not receiving the full benefit of system services at the local point of entry, the school library itself. In 1973, Alphonse Trezza, then director of the Illinois State Library, took the next step in system development, a step that led to the creation of multitype service in each of the systems. He urged the systems to affiliate academic libraries in system cooperation. In 1974 and 1975 he urged the systems to affiliate school and special libraries respectively. The systems followed the Illinois State Library leadership in this respect and did affiliate nonpublic libraries. Multityping and ILLINET (the Illinois Library and Information Network) were thus born.

This affiliation of nonpublic libraries by public library systems was made legally possible by the exercise of the library system board power to contract with any body for library service. The System Act itself was not amended, and nonpublic libraries, though they were undoubtedly part of the systems, were not represented on the system boards. By the end of the 1970s almost fifteen hundred nonpublic libraries were affiliated with the systems, and the network embraced more than two thousand members. The library systems had become multitype in all but name and governance.

In 1980 the ILA Committee on Multitype Organizations/Systems (COMLOS) issued its report recommending that the Library System Act be amended to legally recognize multitype systems and to allow representation of nonpublic libraries on system boards. In 1983 the Act was amended to implement the recommendations. Beginning in 1984 systems began using the legal mechanism provided in the Act to convert to multitype. Each proceeded at its own rate. By 1990 all of the systems had taken advantage of the opportunity to convert to multitype.

Automation

When systems were authorized in 1965 new technologies had already appeared in libraries, but the

technologies in question were photocopying, microforms, and punched card processing. Computers were hardly known in libraries. The Library of Congress and some university libraries had begun working with automation, but MARC was still in its infancy and OCLC was not yet born. But the scene began to change quickly. Within ten years computers had burst upon the scene. The library systems proved to be the natural vehicles for pioneering the new circulation and cataloging systems. In 1974 CLSI and OCLC were introduced in Illinois and the computer revolution had begun. It is a continuous revolution and it still goes on.

Library systems were the front-runners in computerization. The Illinois State Library realized that automation was a bond of unity within the network, and promoted it in every way. It made LSCA funds available to automate the systems and established the ILLINET Bibliographic Data Base Service (IBDBS) with the Illinois State Library to broker OCLC services for libraries, public and nonpublic, in the state. Now all system headquarters, most larger and many smaller libraries are automated in some degree. Where the revolution will take us we do not know for sure. The future is truly mind-boggling. We are living in an age where science fiction is daily becoming reality. In the library world we can only look upon what has been done, and that it is good.

If we do not know what the future has in store, we do know the effects automation has had so far. It has improved services to users in many ways by promoting greater bibliographic access and faster response time in circulation and cataloging. These were all expected results. But automation has played a larger and more constructive role in network building. It has provided cement to bind system members closer together by ties of mutual interdependence and cooperation. It has been a force for change in many aspects of system operations, and has been a major element in other developments such as multotyping and the transformation of system headquarters services. It has stimulated a new vision of headquarters as a switching center. Automation is irreversible. By its nature it breaks down barriers to cooperation. Libraries will never again be the same – the expectation is that they will only become better.

Library Systems as Facilitators of Services

In basic system theory a system is a mechanism for resource sharing and cooperation among the members of the system. This concept is stated explicitly in the Illinois Library System Act. The Act says that members will “provide some or all services on a cooperative basis.” The Act does not attempt to specify what services will be provided or how they will be provided. It does not require or even mention system headquarters.

This fundamental system theory works well when member libraries have substantial resources to share with one another. The theory does not work nearly as well when most members of a system have limited library resources. Libraries in small communities are often in this category. This reality certainly exists in Illinois where many parts of the state are highly rural. The Library System Act recognizes this fact though it does not do so explicitly. It recognizes this fact indirectly in the provisions for major state funding for the systems.

In Illinois, systems have dual roles that have come to be labeled as “provider” and “facilitator”. Where member libraries have resources that can be shared it is the role of the system headquarters to facilitate or promote sharing and cooperation among members. Where member libraries lack resources to share, the system headquarters is expected to provide services from a central source owned by the system. In theory the facilitator role is the ideal where the economic and social base make it practicable. In most parts of Illinois the facilitator role cannot be the exclusive one, and in some areas of the state the provider role will continue to be predominant for some time yet.

From the beginning, the systems in Illinois were designed to have sufficient financial resources to fill the provider role that had formerly been filled for decades by the Illinois State Library in its library extension services to the state as a whole. Though systems were not legally required to do so, they will established a headquarters operation that eventually included a building, staff, and in most cases, collections. Consciously or unconsciously they were established very often on the model of the Illinois State Library, though locally controlled. The Illinois State Library encouraged this mode of thinking when it drew up its rules that required system headquarters to meet quantitative standards for staff and collections. The idea of system headquarters as little state libraries seemed natural enough at the time.

Yet also from the beginning, where member libraries had major collections, efforts were made to work out patterns of cooperation between the headquarters and the member resource libraries so that resources could be shared throughout the system. From the start, all systems were both facilitators and providers though in varying degrees. The balance or predominance of one role over another varied from system-to-system. Ultimately, the character of the system has been determined not so much by the desires or inclination of the systems as by economic and demographic conditions that lend themselves to a particular type of development.

As the systems have evolved there have been three major patterns of development. Metropolitan systems in the northeastern metropolitan area of the state have as members many large and medium size libraries, and relatively few small ones. In these systems the facilitator role has been the predominant one. In many other parts of the state, in the north, central, and eastern portions, the systems have been more balanced, with a high proportion of rural population and libraries, but with one or two large libraries that can function as system resource centers. In the third pattern the rural element predominates with few libraries of even medium size.

Regardless of the original balance between the facilitator and provider roles almost all of the systems have reduced their operations as providers in the last ten years. A few statistics will highlight this trend. In the early 1970s the systems spend an average of 25 percent of their income for the purchase of library materials. In recent years (1986-1987) this figure has been reduced to 9-10 percent. Most of the systems still have large headquarters collections, but they are aging collections, since the systems are adding to them at much reduced rates.

This reduction in system expenditures reflects the changing role of the system headquarters as a source of materials and interloan. Obviously in the affected systems there is much greater reliance on interloan among members themselves. This role change has been brought about primarily by the two developments already discussed – multityping and automation. Multityping has brought a significant increase in member library resources in most of the systems. The addition of academic and special libraries has enriched the total member library resources and has reduced the need for system headquarters collections. Automation has played a significant part of providing greater bibliographic access to member resources, and has forced systems to adjust their budgets to pay for the costs of automation.

It is virtually certain that in the years to come systems will do more facilitating and less providing than in the past. The very fact that systems are successful in promoting the development of their members will make this inevitable. The question then will be, at what rate and how far will this change take place in the various parts of the state. The changes that take place in any region will be dependent on conditions in that region. The system roles of facilitator and provider must be based on the realities of community life, and should not be determined by any abstract theory. As long as Illinois varies in its length and breadth so will the roles of library systems vary in their service to the regions of the state.

Intersystem Cooperation and Intersystem Contracts for Service

Intersystem cooperation was envisaged from the beginning in Illinois. The Library Systems Act created a network of systems and the systems were expected to work together in achieving the objectives of the Act. Adherence to a statewide interlibrary loan code, which went far beyond the national code, was required as a basic element in cooperation. The systems went beyond this and established an Intersystem Reciprocal Borrowing Agreement to which most of the systems are signatories. These are quite formal kinds of cooperation. There have been many types of informal cooperation especially in the sharing of management information of various kinds. The Illinois Library System Directors' Organization has been a vehicle of such sharing.

While resource sharing among local libraries is part of the very tissue of systems, and resource sharing among systems is essential to any network, intersystem contracts for service were not part of the original system and network theory. Such contracts have developed in response to special conditions. While a few contracts were developed early in the network most of them have been devised in the last half dozen years. All of the eighteen systems have entered into at least one intersystem contract. Though the numbers of these agreements are large, and apparently growing, they are limited in scope. Five systems are involved in contracts for audiovisual services, six in contracts for database management, eighteen in contracts for database management, eighteen in contracts for services to the blind and physically handicapped, and two systems in contracts for reference service.

The existence of these contracts has raised certain questions. Why do they exist, and what do they signify for future system development? There is little doubt that the rising cost of system operations has been a major factor, and the financial crunch on system funding has spurred contracting. It is true that the Suburban Audiovisual Service (SAVS) has been supported by comparatively wealthy systems, but this case notwithstanding, in most cases, contracting has been budget driven.

In some cases contracting has gone against the system grain and has been adopted only as a matter of financial necessity. When a system headquarters reduces its role in collection building it does so on the grounds that resource sharing among the members will pick up the slack. No weakness in the system as such is implied. But when a system enters into an intersystem contract there is an admission that neither the headquarters nor the members can fill the need. This is an admission that systems have not always been enthusiastic about making. However, in some cases contracting has been looked upon more positively, as a necessary good. This has been true especially in regard to database management and automation.

What is the ultimate significance of contracting? Does the existence of the present contact show that there are too many systems in Illinois that a reduction in number is called for? Or does it show that systems are under funded? Probably not all the existing (eighteen) need to be full service systems. While some of them have the resources to provide a full range of service, there are others with more limited resources that might fill essential roles for their members without being full service bodies. These are questions that get to the very heart of the purpose of systems and must be faced squarely and objectively. We need a consensus on these issues so we can develop long-range strategies to meet them.

The Development of Member Libraries

Library systems were created to improve library services at the local level. Systems have no other reason for existing. The improvement of local library service can come about in two different ways. It comes about when the systems provide backup services to libraries, such as interlibrary loan and reference. These supplemental services provide immediate benefits to users. However, the most

important long-range improvements are in the local libraries themselves, in the quality of their services, their staff, and resources. Both kinds of improvement have taken place during the last two decades. The systems have played the role expected of them. They have assisted libraries with supplemental services such as reference and interloan and they have stimulated development through consultant services and continuing education. They have made demands on members in terms of interlibrary cooperation, which, in turn, have spurred local development.

Until the 1970s, the effort at improvement was focused on the creation of central system service and the development of the system headquarters. Several years of funding were required to build the resources for this purpose, so that systems would be geared to take over completely the Illinois State Library extension role. At the same time it was assumed that the systems would improve local library service by supplemental services. This did happen and the system did have a great impact on the services of local libraries.

However, there was an unfavorable side to this picture. The improvement of local libraries themselves did not proceed at the pace that was expected and desired. The first need that was recognized by the state library community was for library standards. The Illinois Library Association adopted *Measures of Quality* in 1972. The standards, and the philosophy behind them, were thoroughly revised by *Avenues to Excellence*, the new standards adopted in 1982. It was apparent that most Illinois libraries fell short of the standards in one or more respects. It was also apparent that public libraries were not making the local effort the law allowed and encouraged. It was found that the 53 percent of the libraries taxed at less than .13 percent and much larger percentage taxed at less than the statutory maximum of .15 percent. The Dunn Committee (The Library Financing Subcommittee of the House Revenue Committee) was created to investigate local library problems and to make recommendations. In 1974 it held a series of meetings and issued its report.

Originally the 100 percent funding of the systems by state grants was considered to be the only state funding needed, except for the modest program of equalization aid grants which were authorized in 1965. The subcommittee recommended, among other things, that the state of Illinois should make direct grants to public libraries that were taxing at a minimum level locally. The purpose behind their approach was to increase local library income by grants, and at the same time encourage libraries to make greater efforts to help themselves. Per capita grants were authorized in 1977 and funds were appropriated and available for distribution in 1979. The grants were quite modest at first. Funding was only \$.27 per capita. The level was gradually increased and in 1986 was at \$1.00 per person. The present annual appropriation of about \$10 million has become a significant contribution to public library financing. In 1989 the Illinois General Assembly authorized a program of grants of \$.75 per student to public school libraries. These grants will also be tied to the achievement of library standards. An appropriation is being requested for 1990.

When the grant program was adopted it was tied to library standards. To be eligible for the grants libraries had to show that they either met or were making progress toward meeting the standards. The underlying philosophy behind *Avenues to Excellence*, the updated standards adopted in 1982 and revised in 1989, was to encourage libraries to engage in continuous planning to achieve objectives based on the standards. The Illinois State Library in its administration of the grant program also adopted this philosophy and has required that libraries adopt some planning and evaluation procedures and to base their requests for fund on this procedures.

It should be noted that the grants to libraries are system grants. They are authorized under the Library System Act and are only available to system members. The intent behind the grants has been to strengthen local libraries, to be sure, but also to lay a stronger foundation for library cooperation and resource sharing. The program of grants to member libraries was expanded in 1983 when the General

Assembly authorized construction grants as part of the “Build Illinois” program. These grants, in conjunction with the federal LSCA construction program, have stimulated library building throughout the state, and have done much to improve the physical plant of libraries, both large and small.

Until the late 1970s the emphasis in system development was on the system headquarters. For the systems, the pattern had been one of steady growth. System funding gradually increased and there was a considerable buildup of resources at system headquarters. The mood and reality was one of expansion. But in the 1970s and 1980s the economic picture in Illinois and the nation changed, and the systems began to feel the effects of the financial crunch which is still with us.

As a result, the focus of system planning and budgeting has been changed. The period of indefinite, linear expansion of resources was over. It was no longer possible to say, “Just wait. We will have the resources. It is only a matter of time.” The systems were forced to budget on the basis of priorities and reallocation of funds. Some services were fixed at a given point of development; some had to be cut back, still others were expanded because, like automation, they had potential to increase resource sharing among members.

Thus system thinking has been reoriented to the original basics. Over the years there was a strong tendency to identify the system with the system headquarters, and the true nature of systems as organizations of members was often lost sight of. We are now back to the fundamental truths. Member libraries, in their corporate unity, are the system. Whatever pattern of system services may emerge at any given time, they may change as the need for them changes. But the basic reality of the system will be the same. The future development of systems must rely heavily on the system headquarters, but the emphasis on member library development and resource sharing must never be lost. Therein lies the future.

Service to the Unserved

One of the fundamental objectives of the Library System Act was “extending library facilities to areas not now served.” This objective presented state planners with the problem of determining the best means of attainment. The most obvious strategy would have been to encourage every unserved community to establish its own library. Since the vast majority of unserved communities are small and have quite limited tax resources this strategy was discounted as undesirable. Another alternative would have been to promote the creation of county libraries and to mandate library service on a county basis. This option was not considered to be a very attractive one since the Illinois county library law has not proved to be a practical one.

The strategic decision was made to concentrate on the creation of larger units of service and to promote the creation of library districts. This decision has colored everything that has happened since. By putting all their “eggs into one basket” library districts, the Illinois State Library, and the systems have been in the ironic position of not always encouraging new libraries. They have generally discouraged the creation of libraries in small communities with a limited tax base. They have opted to promote a strategy that, like the mills of God, grinds slowly. Though progress has been made in reducing the number of the unserved the results have not been spectacular. From 1965 to 1986 the percent of the unserved has gone down from 19.5 percent to 15 percent. On the surface this looks like a disappointing result for twenty years of system existence.

Whether this conclusion is justifiable is debatable. By rejecting the more obvious and “quick” solutions the Illinois State Library and the systems have taken a calculated risk. They have chosen to promote not just libraries, but quality libraries. The root of the problem is the inability of very small communities to

support quality service on the basis of the traditional local government cities, villages, and townships. The creation of library districts forces people to look beyond their local boundaries to a larger community. This, in turn, requires that they set aside some local feelings and rivalries. The attitude to be changed is deep rooted and change does not always come easy. The solution of the problem of the unserved on the basis of library districts may be slow in coming, but progress is being made.

If the results have not been statically overpowering, neither have they been insignificant. In order to encourage library districts, the Illinois State Library developed a program of Project PLUS grants to libraries for up to two years, and has used federal funds for this purpose. Since 1972 there have been seventy-four such projects, of which fifty-nine have resulted in successful referenda to establish new districts, or to annex unserved territory to existing systems. By this means, 517,064 persons have been added to the number of the served population. The federal investment in this project has been \$5,739,537. This data on Project PLUS shows only one side of the story. Many districts have been created independently of Project PLUS. Indeed the overall growth of library districts in Illinois has been quite striking. In 1965 there were twenty-six library districts in the state, a mere 5 percent of the total. By 1989 there 203 districts or 33 percent of the total public libraries. The vast majority of these districts have not been new libraries in the sense they were created where no previous libraries existed. Most of them have resulted from the conversion of an existing library and the annexation of unserved territory. These are remarkable figures. If the trend continues at anything like the present rate the majority of public libraries could be districts by the end of this century.

It may be that the problem of the untaxed/unserved should not be separated from the problem of small libraries with a limited tax base. Most of the unserved areas are areas with low population density, and most of what we call small libraries are in similar areas. Perhaps the best approach is one that attacks both problems. In this light, mandated countywide library service might be an answer. If this is true the present county library law should be reconsidered and possibly revised to make it more conducive to library development.

The library systems have played key roles in the development of districts and of Project PLUS. When no Project PLUS was involved the systems have provided consultant assistance to the local planners. When there was a Project PLUS they have played a consultant role in planning and administering them. In many cases the systems have been the applicant agency and the administrator of the projects. In all cases they have been required to provide some cash or materials to the project library. Thus the role of library systems in the development of library districts has been indispensable. Without their help library districts would be far fewer in number.

Other Trends in System Development

The topics that have been discussed up to this point have all been major factors in system development. There are a number of other trends that have been equally important perhaps, and which are of vital concern to the state as a whole. In an historical article of this kind they must be mentioned to preserve the broad perspective of system development, but due to the space limitations of this article they can only be treated in very summary fashion.

Network Development

The network supporting the systems developed along with them. In the process it acquired a special name, the Illinois Library and Information Network (ILLINET). Multityping brought new resources into play and expanded the scope of the network to embrace the entire community of academic, public, school, and special libraries. When the network was first created in 1966 there were four large libraries designated to serve as Research and Reference Centers; the Chicago Public Library, the Illinois State Library, and the libraries of the University of Illinois and Southern Illinois University. All received

state funding to support their network role. In 1975 three Special Resource Centers were added to the network – the University of Chicago Library, the John Crerar Library (since merged with the University of Chicago) and the Northwestern University Library – thereby greatly expanding the capacity of the network to provide specialized resources to libraries. Efficiency in the delivery of materials was also expanded in 1980 when the State Library established a statewide interconnecting van delivery service. The impact of automation has already been noted. In these many ways ILLINET has become a vast mechanism tied to advanced technology support library service in even our smallest communities.

Program for Designated Populations

At the same time that the systems were supporting the development of local library services to the general public, they were also engaged in transforming services to the blind and physically disabled, and to correctional institutions. These programs had long been considered the special responsibility of the Illinois State Library. In keeping with a comprehensive system and networking theory these programs were reoriented and worked into the system structure as system services. Beginning in 1982 the Illinois General Assembly has appropriated special funds to support the Radio Information Service, thereby expanding the scope and outreach of the BPH programs.

Service to state correctional institutions also became a system service with many improvements in the quality of service at the individual institutional level. However, tight budgeting at the state level made it increasingly difficult for systems to maintain the levels of quality in their service. In 1986, by joint agreement, the State Library transferred the jurisdiction of correctional library service to the Illinois Department of Corrections. In the meantime the systems had developed good operating libraries in the institutions and turned over a sound functioning product to the department.

Cooperative Collection Development

Beginning in the late 1970s there has been a significant interest in cooperative collection development in Illinois. This interest has been spurred by tight budgets and a desire to make the most out of resource sharing. A number of well-organized projects have been undertaken to explore the possibilities and to develop formal procedures. The State Library has used LSCA moneys to fund projects of different types to promote the concept in the network. In 1980 the Illinois Valley Library System began five years of work to develop and test cooperative procedures for member libraries. A manual of procedures was published, distributed, and tested in libraries of all types. Since then there have been other LSCA projects for workshops, for testing in several other systems, and for a study to assess the progress being made and the problems being encountered. The latest in the series of projects has been the establishment of a state coordinating office at DePaul University, Chicago. The office will coordinate the examination of the collection development process statewide. The ultimate goal will be the creation of a plan for a statewide cooperative collection development system to function within the network.

Most of the library systems have engaged in some type of cooperative activity or in pilot projects. As a result many libraries now engage in formal or informal cooperative activities. Such activities involve the acquisition of special kinds of materials, such as periodicals, reference, or video, or concentration on specific subject areas such as health, law, business, repair, etc. Interest in cooperative collection development remains at a high level, though the process has proven to be highly complex. CCCD activities often merge into cooperative databases and other initiatives to promote greater intrasystem and intersystem accessibility. What is certain is that more than ever before libraries of all types are cooperating and communicating with another in their acquisitions programs. More extensive cooperative efforts will just as certainly come about in the future.

SILO and Preservation

We can conclude this brief summary of other statewide cooperative efforts with a final bit of alphabet soup.

SILO, the Serials of Illinois Online, was initiated in 1982 and was eventually located within the State Library. It is an online copy-specific, statewide union list of serials (periodicals and newspapers) for Illinois. Over seven hundred libraries, academic, public, school, and special, are members of the system. The database contains approximately four hundred thousand local data records. An important by-product is the OCLC-produced offline union lists in paper, microfiche, or magnetic tape. In 1989 SILO produced a union list of the holdings of 114 health science libraries that are members of the system.

Finally there is the Illinois State Library Preservation Office, which was established in the spring of 1987 to continue the outreach services for library preservation, and conservation which had been provided by the Illinois Cooperative Conservation Program at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. The office currently provides reference and referral service on conservation matters, AV loan service, and assistance to libraries in the preparation of disaster plans. It will develop a series of workshops on book repair training and disaster planning.

The Evaluation of Library Systems

In the early years of system operation, the process of system evaluation was a relatively simple one. The Illinois State Library had set quantitative standards in its rules for system staffing, hours of service, and collections. Since the system headquarters had to start from zero point in these respects, their tasks were to accumulate resources at the headquarters so that they could meet the standards. By about 1970, the system had pretty much met all these standards and the question of continuous system evaluation first arose as a problem to be solved.

In its first response to the problem, the Illinois State Library attempted a comprehensive evaluation by the Illinois State Library staff and the system members. It has to give up the task when it realized that it simply did not have adequate evaluation measures it could use objectively, except the standards in its rules which were too minimal and which the systems already met in large part. The needs to be met varied too much from system-to-system, as did the resources each system had available to meet those needs. In the country as a whole, evaluation by fixed, objective standards was being questioned. The Illinois State Library followed the national trend by turning from standards to planning by individual objectives by each system.

The Illinois State Library has recognized the individual nature of system plans, and has followed its own informal procedures in evaluating the systems, based on a review of system annual reports, budgets, and plan updates. Since the number of systems is limited, it has not been difficult to keep in touch with system developments. For the Illinois State Library purposes, this kind of evaluation was considered to be adequate until recently, when it has become evident that the systems are entering a new phase in development.

The major event in the development of the present efforts for evaluation of library systems was the publication of the final report, in December 1986, of the study of Illinois library systems conducted by HBW Associates. This study had been triggered by an earlier report. In 1981, the State Library had engaged the firm on management consultants, Cresap, McCormick and Paget, to do a management study of the State Library operations. In passing, the consultants took a look at the library systems. They recommended that various aspects of systems be studied and that the need for eighteen library systems should be reexamined.

The HBW final report was entitled, *Vision 1996: A Plan for the Illinois Library Systems in the Next*

Decade. This report is the first full-scale study of the library systems in Illinois. As one might expect, the report has stimulated a great deal of discussion. Critics of the report have pointed to the methodology used and the lack of adequate documentation to support some of the key recommendations. At the same time, virtually all the comments have recognized the validity of many of the recommendations and their value for the future. The positive effect of the study has been to lay out a comprehensive agenda for the review of all aspects of system development and to lay the basis for long-range planning. Fundamental issues have been raised that must be addressed in a constructive fashion to clear the way for decision-making on the future roles and responsibilities of library systems in Illinois.

It was generally agreed that the entire body of the recommendations should not be accepted in the form presented. It was felt that each recommendation had to be studied on its own merits before any decision could be made as to whether, or to what extent, it should be accepted. In other words, the consensus was that more study and discussion was needed before any implementation could be agreed upon.

When it was clear that the document merited intensive review, the Illinois State Library, in conjunction with the Illinois Library Association, appointed a "Blue Ribbon Task Force" to review the study report. The members of the task force were selected as a representative cross-section of the Illinois library community. The purposes of the task force were: (1) to review the HBW final report and recommend priorities for additional discussion and implementation; (2) to comment on related issues that merit discussion by the Illinois library community; (3) to recommend possible legislative action. The task force submitted a formal report in December 1987.¹⁷

The Blue Ribbon Task Force recommended the development of a formal program of system evaluation and the establishment of minimum standards of service for library systems and system member libraries. The State Library attached high priority to these recommendations. In March 1988 a task force was appointed to draft library system standards. The task force has met frequently and has worked intensively. A draft set of standards will be forthcoming in 1990.

¹ *Illinois Libraries*, January 1920, pp.3-7

² *Ibid.*, October 1927, p. 45.

³ *Ibid.*, April 1935, p. 2.

⁴ *Ibid.*, January 1936, p. 67.

⁵ *Ibid.*, December 1939, p. 18.

⁶ *Ibid.*, March 1940, p. 3.

⁷ *Ill.Rev.Stat.*, Ch. 128, par. 104.

⁸ *Illinois Libraries*, June 1946, p. 277.

⁹ *Ibid.*, March 1949, pp. 617-23.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, January 1959, p. 33.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, March 1962, pp. 173-76.

¹² Mary Lee Bundy, "What Farmers Think of Libraries," *Illinois Libraries*, November 1960, pp. 543-92.

¹³ *Illinois Libraries*, March 1963, pp. 36-37.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, March 1964, p. 197.

¹⁵ Robert H. Rohlf, "A Plan for Library Development in Illinois." *Illinois Libraries*, pp.215-53, p. 232.

¹⁷ "The Final Report of the Blue Ribbon Task Force: was published in *Illinois Libraries*, June 1988, pp. 433-41. The summary recommendations of the HBW study are included in the same issue of *Illinois Libraries*, pp. 416-33.

The Chicago Library System 1965-1990

by Eva R. Brown

(At the time of the article Eva R. Brown was director, Multitype Library System Development, Chicago Library System.)

Under the Library Systems Act of 1965, the Chicago Library System was established as a public library system, consisting of the Chicago Public Library with all its branches serving a population of more than 3 million residents. The CPL Central Library assumed its role as system headquarters library and began to implement new system wide services and to strengthen and broaden existing ones: interlibrary loan and reference service, centralized programming assistance, and system wide children's, young adults' and adults' services. In the late '60s, an important new service was added with the coordination of existing services to the blind into the Chicago Subregional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. The end of that decade also saw the establishment of the "Study Unlimited" service, which coordinates adult education and literary programs at the CPL Central Library, regional, and branch libraries.

CPL/CLS became an active participant in the activities of the Illinois Regional Library Council – the first project, in the early '70s, to encourage cooperation among libraries of all kinds in the Chicago metropolitan area. Outreach to academic, special, and school libraries certainly was becoming a national trend, and Illinois was among the first states to take a "systematic" approach in the truest sense of that term. Taking up the Illinois State Library's challenge, the Chicago Library System, along with the other seventeen systems in the state, began to invite academic libraries (in 1973) and special library (in 1974) to become affiliates of the system. In those years, just before automation began to take hold in libraries, the basic system services of interlibrary loan and reference provided the first access points to the large collections of the designated Research and Reference Centers (of which the Chicago Public Library is one) via a largely hierarchical referral system which constituted the beginning of the Illinois Library and Information Network (ILLINET). The CPL/Central Library also became an early member, in 1974, of OCLC, which enabled it to start speeding up the process of locating needed materials.

In 1975, almost exactly to the date of its tenth anniversary, the Chicago Library System obtained, along with most of the other systems in the state, an LSCA grant to establish the position of an interlibrary cooperation consultant, in order to facilitate the recruitment and participation of nonpublic affiliates. At that time, CLS had thirty-one academic and forty-six special library affiliates, a total of seventy-seven. The year 1975 was truly a year of firsts: the first system newsletter was published, the first CLS affiliates meeting was held and the first *CLS ILLINET Procedures Manual* was published. A major effort was made to identify all libraries in CLS eligible to become CLS affiliates. All branch librarians of the Chicago Public Library participated in district programs on ILLINET and multitype library cooperation in CLS. During the following year, cooperative relationships between the Chicago Public Library and the CLS affiliates grew stronger in three areas: (1) the subject divisions in the CPL Central Library and the Cultural Center held orientation session for librarians from CLS affiliates; (2) the delivery system then connecting the Metropolitan Library Systems around Chicago was extended into CLS with initially seventeen deposit points throughout the system: and (3) the CPL branch libraries were offered the option to participate in the Infopass program. The Infopass program, originally developed by the CLS Interlibrary Cooperation Coordinator for the Illinois Regional Library Council, provides for carefully screened referrals that enable individuals to gain personal access to library collections not generally open to the public. A new CLS publication, the bimonthly *Chicago Area Library Activities and Events* (now: *Chicago Area Librarians' Calendar*), has also served, since 1976, to bring administrators and staff members from libraries of all types and sizes closer together in programs and activities of common interest not only in Chicago, but in the larger metropolitan area as well. The number of CLS affiliates grew considerably after a major campaign of publicity and visits to potential participating libraries.

Finally, this banner year of 1976 saw the establishment of the CLS Affiliates Advisory Council designed to represent the interests of the CLS affiliates vis-à-vis the CPL/CLS Board of Directors and administration. Over the years, the role of the Affiliates Advisory Council was to grow from one of a strictly advisory panel to that of a major partner in the process of converting CLS to a multitype library system with its own administration. Also in 1976, the Chicago Public Library took the significant step of discontinuing its traveling branches and mini-vans, after evaluating the stage of development in the number and quality of its branch libraries. The first full year in the CPL Central Library's temporary quarters at 425 North Michigan Avenue was also marked by the beginnings of the planning process for a new Central Library building, a development closely watched by the entire library community in Chicago.

During the following years, CLS services and activities were solidified and expanded, especially in the area of continuing education and access to online reference databases. Regular bimonthly series of basic workshops on CLS and ILLINET procedures, "ILLINET 101" were initiated by the CPL Bibliographic and Interlibrary Loan Center, with alternating workshops on the new OCLC Interlibrary Loan Subsystem added in 1979. A very successful collaboration between CLS and the Continuing Education Office of the Medical Library Association resulted in the innovative offering of several series of appropriate MLS CE courses to the multitype library community in CLS and surrounding systems. Medical librarians were able to obtain required or desired CE credits locally, in addition to such opportunities at LS conferences; and other librarians were able to take advantage of generic courses in specialized skills. Major issues in librarianship spawned other multiple program series: the new Copyright Law (1977), and Cooperative Collection Development in Illinois (1978).

The advance of computers into libraries provided the impetus for new system services. A LSCA grant project, developed by the Interlibrary Cooperation Office, made possible the establishment of the Computer-Assisted Reference Center (CARC) at the CPL Central Library, which included hardware and software, subscriptions to several major database vendor services, training, and a partial subsidy for online charges. CARC served not only individual CPL users, but also many affiliates who needed to have searches performed and also wished to test the utility of databases before establishing search services in their own libraries.

In an effort to improve bibliographic access to the extraordinary wealth of library collections in Chicago, another LSCA project assisted in the completion of the microfiche edition of the Chicago Union Catalog of Religion and Theology, containing pre-1978 holdings in libraries of the Chicago Cluster of Theological Schools and the University of Chicago libraries. The project expanded the catalog to include the holdings of the Newberry Library in this subject area. The final product contains 450,000 holdings records, which were not likely to be converted to OCLC in the foreseeable future.

The beginning of the 1980s decade brought new initiatives in services and cooperative activities to the libraries in the system, whose number, aside from the Chicago Public Library and its two regional and eighty-four branch libraries, had grown to forty-six academic and 180 special libraries – a total of 226 affiliates.

At the request of the Metropolitan Library Systems' Directors, their continuing education planners formed a METS Continuing Education Committee charged with developing workshops that could be replicated throughout the area, in order to avoid duplication of effort and to utilize the participating systems' expertise and resources for the benefit of all librarians in the region. For the Chicago Library System, as for the other systems in the METS area, this regional collaboration has meant a marked increase in continuing education opportunities at all levels – from support staff to professional librarians and administrators, at low registration fees and, in most cases, with a choice of dates and locations.

The Chicago Library System also began to take the first steps towards the affiliation of school libraries. A task force established guidelines, and although the libraries in the Chicago public schools were not to affiliate until several years later, private high school libraries began to join the system.

In an effort to cure the problems of the delivery service inherent in its size and density, eight additional daily stops at affiliated libraries were established in 1981, providing more deposit points for additional libraries.

As the Chicago Public Library began to plan for its computerized circulation system, the Affiliates Advisory Council contributed a report on elements to consider from their and their users' point of view.

As if to prove that the variety and accessibility of library resources can be explored not only on the computer but also on foot, another task force of the AAC assisted in organizing the first of several walking tour series to many small clusters of academic and special libraries in the city. Who of the participants will ever forget the one that started at the Playboy Library and ended at ALA?

The Chicago Library System has been the only system in the state that never compiled a union list of serials, for a variety of good reasons. Several incompatible union lists were created by subject-related groups – law libraries, medical libraries, the Cluster of Theological Libraries – and the “big red book,” the *Union List of Serials Holdings in Illinois Special Libraries*, was published in 1978. The Chicago Public Library was publishing its own serials list. Most of the academic libraries' serials holdings were not represented in any of these lists. And yet, the challenge to make the infinite variety of the serials literature represented in Chicago's libraries more accessible to all libraries in Chicago and Illinois, remained. The early '80s brought an opportunity to solve this dilemma, when the Illinois State Library funded the establishment of Serials in Illinois Online (SILO), utilizing the OCLC union listing capability. Since SILO participation was open to both OCLC and non-OCLC libraries, the CLS Multitype Library System Development (formerly Interlibrary Cooperation) Office undertook a continuing campaign encouraging CLS affiliates to join SILO. In 1984, a small LSCA grant facilitated the addition of twelve affiliate libraries' holdings, while many others joined on their own. In 1989, another grant was obtained to establish the CLS SILO Service Center, which, as a permanent system service, will not only facilitate the addition of new participants' holdings records, but will also provide ongoing updating services to libraries that wish to use them. Simultaneously, the Chicago Association of Law Libraries (CALL) obtained an LSCA grant to convert its union list of serials to SILO, adding about sixty libraries in the Chicago area to that database. Per January 1, 1990, 129 CLS affiliates and the Chicago Public Library were SILO participants.

Cooperative collection development has been an area of increased CPL/CLS activities since the early '80s as well. A two year process of self-assessment of the CPL subject divisions culminated in the 1982 *Collection Development Statement* which took into account, although informally, the subject strengths in other libraries' collections as well as perceived unmet needs. In the following years, new subject interest groups among all types of libraries developed (foreign languages; business/economics; visual and performing arts) and existing groups (education; science/technology) were encouraged to add a cooperative collection development dimension to their concerns. One product, funded by a LSCA grant, was the *Science/Technology Resource Guide* (1985).

A systematic program of cooperative collection development, including the development of assessment methodologies for all types of libraries, was begun, again with LSCA grants, in 1987. The first phase consisted of a planning grant to develop quantitative and qualitative assessment methodologies for the collections in the Chicago Public Library with all its entities. In the following phase, the actual assessments of all CPL collections were performed, resulting in a large amount of data to be published

in three volumes by late 1990. Simultaneously, methodologies were developed for the quantitative and qualitative assessment of affiliate libraries' collections. They were tested in twelve sites, and in June 1989 a revised CLS *Collection Assessment Manual* was published for use by affiliates. During the following project year, still in progress, assessments of thirty-six affiliate libraries are taking place, and it is hoped that another grant will be approved to continue assessments. Eventually, the mapping of library collections in CLS is intended to result in collection development agreements designed to avoid unnecessary duplications and fill collection gaps.

In 1986, the Affiliates Advisory Council, prompted by the conversion of other Illinois library systems to multitype systems, by the desire to contribute in a concrete and constructive way to the future development of the Chicago Library System, and by the imminent arrival of a new commissioner of CPL/CLS, undertook a major effort to solicit affiliates' ideas, recommendations, and concerns. Two days of group meetings resulted in the report, *The Future of the Chicago Library System: Views of the Affiliate Members* (1986). The statewide study of systems undertaken a few months later by HBW Associates, *Vision 1996: A Plan for the Illinois Library Systems in the Next Decade* (1986) also contained special recommendations for the Chicago Library System. While not all of these ideas and recommendations lent themselves to early implementation, some were acted upon immediately, while others were linked to the eventual conversion of CLS to a multitype system. In 1987, a conversion task force was established, consisting of representatives from both the Chicago Public Library and the affiliates. In close communication with the Affiliates Advisory Council, they discussed, negotiated, and drafted the set of documents required for the application for conversion, which were approved by the CPL/CLS Board of Directors in June 1989 and submitted to the Illinois State Library. The implementation of the conversion is planned for July 1, 1990. The new CLS Board of Directors will consist of six representatives from the Chicago Public Library, three from academic, three from special libraries, and one from the Chicago Public Schools, with two school library representatives to be added when membership from nonpublic schools increases. A new CLS administration will be established apart from CPL. At the time of this writing, planning for the transition is in high gear. Per January 1, 1990, the Chicago Library System's affiliates numbered 52 academic, 230 special, and 75 high school libraries, a total of 357. When they join as member libraries, together with the Chicago Public Library and all its entities, in the new CLS structure, the purpose of the Plan of Cooperation, first drafted by a special librarian, will be fulfilled: "The Chicago Library System encourages the development of effective library programs and information services at the local library level; stimulates cooperation of all types of libraries to fully utilize total system resources; and facilitates library programs and services beyond the scope of maximum and effective local library efforts."

Growing Pains: The Early Years of Library Systems

by James A. Ubel

(James A. Ubel was the original executive director of the Shawnee Library System and served until 2001.)

Library systems were born in a period of great optimism and social change. Lyndon Johnson's Great Society initiatives resulted in billions of dollars for new programs, and most state governments added their own millions. In contrast to FDR's New Deal, which emphasized public works, the Great Society emphasized education—including books and libraries. The nation was at war, but President Johnson assured us we could afford both guns and butter. Money flowed.

The 1965 Library System Act created library systems, charging them to supplement the services of local public libraries and to extend library service to the several million citizens who then had no service. It was unclear how the Illinois General Assembly intended systems to serve the unserved, as we were clearly admonished to “supplement, not supplant” local efforts. Even at the generous funding levels of the 1960's and early 1970's, we never had the money to even begin direct service to the unserved.

As the new library systems were formed, eighteen system directors were employed. Half of these were leading public librarians in Illinois and half were from other states—Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York and Tennessee. As a result, a broad spectrum of experiences and ideas from around the country were added to the Illinois mix. A combination of federal and state funds enabled systems to obtain headquarters buildings. Most systems constructed new buildings, but some retrofitted existing structures.

In the late 1960's the national mood suddenly turned ugly as the Vietnam War escalated and the promises of the 1964 Civil Rights Act went unfulfilled. In rapid fire we were shocked by the assassinations of Robert Kennedy and Martin Luther King, Jr., spontaneous violence in our cities, and the turmoil of the 1968 Democratic National Convention in Chicago. I can still hear Lyndon Johnson's tearful voice pleading for Americans to stop destroying their country.

System directors and Illinois State Library staff met frequently to plan services. While some individual services were targeted to meet unique regional needs, a statewide commonality emerged that included most services systems still offer today—consulting, reference, interlibrary loan, delivery and continuing education.

During the first dozen years systems spent millions of dollars on library materials. Most systems built large headquarters collections, but a few chose to augment the collections of their larger public libraries. During the 1960's the Shawnee Library System purchased 20,000 books per year. Audiovisual materials were not neglected. Each system either built its own 16 millimeter film collection or participated in an A-V cooperative.

By the late 1970's the good times had ended. Double-digit inflation forced belt tightening at all levels of government. The Illinois State Library shifted its funding priorities away from library systems to provide more direct support to local libraries.

Three important developments, beginning in the late 1970's, led to a gradual “makeover” of library systems:

- The 1977 Dunn Report called for direct per capita aid to public libraries. This aid was later expanded to include school libraries.
- System-led Interlibrary Cooperation Projects led to the inclusion of school, academic and special libraries as full system members.

- The growth of library automation made resource sharing on a large scale efficient and affordable.

The process of changing the nature of library systems and adapting to funding realities was often contentious—but in the end a spirit of cooperation prevailed. While it is tempting to look back at the “good old day”, I believe that with the current structure of library service, the people of Illinois are better served.

Illinois Library Systems – Memories and Thoughts

by Robert McClarren

(Robert McClarren was the original director of the North Suburban Library System and served until 1989.)

Although I was out of state in 1965 (and had been for 10 years), I was aware of the major library happening in Illinois, culminating in the passage of the Library Systems Act. Somewhat to my surprise, in early 1967 I became the first employee of the North Suburban Library System, and a participant in implementing the provisions of the new law and achieving its hopes.

I soon realized that, in astrological terms, “the planets had been in conjunction”. I’m unaware in library history of a project of this magnitude coming to pass as quickly and seemingly so effortlessly. (Here, it became law on the first try. In New York, whose model we largely used, it took nearly a dozen tries.) Credit goes to many: the period’s three successive Secretaries of State (and titular State Librarians), whose support and clout were essential; the team of de Lafayette Reid (State Library director) and Al Trezza (the Illinois Library Association’s legislative leader), the project’s leaders Phyllis Maggeroli (ILA President), who proposed the project; Robert Rohlf, the library consultant who did the year-long basic study; ILA Legislative Committee members, Les Stoffel, Jack Chitwood, and Bill Bryan; and the statewide community of libraries and librarians who actively endorsed the idea.

By June 30, 1966, in less than a year of the law’s signing, the 18 systems, encompassing the entire state, had been established. The rapidity with which the systems were organized caught the State Library short. The State Library had anticipated that it would take several years and were short-budgeted for the establishment grants. (They made up the shortfall by using federal Library Services and Construction Act funds.) Within the first year or so virtually every public library had elected to join a system and all were in within 5 years. (To my knowledge only one library withdrew membership; when asked why, it had no answer and rejoined the system.)

Principal objections to system membership were two: the requirement that members participate in reciprocal borrowing and/or the system was a device of the State to take over the local library. (While the intent of the law was the sharing of resources on a personal basis, it did not mention the phrase “reciprocal borrowing”. The non-joiners contended that their agreement was met by their participation in the traditional interlibrary loan.) But the State Library was insistent and persistent, and the stellar reciprocal borrowing program, with its necessary dedicated, statewide inter-system delivery and the statewide catalog (ILLINET, the Illinois Library Information Network), came to pass. (One might say that this made virtually every other public library in Illinois a branch of one’s own public library.)

Not to be overlooked are two other major achievements. A large number of Illinois citizens previously without local tax supported libraries, gained library service through system-initiated efforts culminating in the establishment of a local library. Additionally, the public library systems evolved into all-inclusive, i.e. multitype library systems of academic, school, special and public libraries. Once all the system directorships had been filled, Jack Chitwood (Director, Northern Illinois Library System) called a meeting of the system directors with the goal of organizing what became the Illinois Library System Directors Organization (ILSDO). There were no officers or dues, with quarterly, one day meetings to be held at the headquarters of each of the 18 systems in their alphabetical order. The Director of the Illinois State Library was included in the membership, with full obligation to participate. The host director presided, with the agenda items contributed by the members before or at the meeting. Attendance was limited to the 19 chief executive officers. These meetings, together with the quarterly meetings of system presidents and directors called by the State Library, and periodic meetings in some regions, established a collegiality that contributed much to problem solving and program development

beyond finite measure. Unfortunately, with the aging of the ILSDO and the changes in the directorships, I believe the collegiality that was contributive in the early decades appears to have disappeared.

In my time political activity was only an occasional and incidental ILSDO endeavor. We disseminated and promoted the interests and efforts of the Illinois Library Association's agenda as requested. Our focus was on operational opportunities and problems, both local and statewide, and on programs, proposed and in place. (And oh yes, when it was Illinois Valley's hosting turn, we engaged in the contest of which one could sample the most items on the Hotel Pere Marquette's fabulous 500 plus Thursday night buffet.)

When ILSDO was largely apolitical, there was an incident worthy of mention. Mike Howlett (Secretary of State and State Librarian, 1973-1977) was not "library friendly", although apparently for political gain among the feminists, he proclaimed that he had the highest-ranking female official in state government (Kay Gesterfield, State Library Director). When the system directors learned that his budget proposal included a cut in system funding, Mary Howe, Starved Rock's system director, called two members of her board who also happened to be members of the legislature. They immediately arranged a fact-finding meeting with Kay Gesterfield. She, according to Howlett's protocol, notified him of the meeting. Joined by her assistant director, Jim Beasley, she met the legislators, although no one from Howlett's office appeared. The legislators then brought their concerns to the Secretary, who then suspended Mr. Beasley, pending firing, for violation of protocol. (The library community assumed that Beasley was a "fall guy" since Howlett politically could ill afford to fire his highly publicized female "star". Beasley filed a grievance; the civil service commission found for him, and he retained his job.) Retribution came from the library community when Mr. Howlett ran for Governor in 1976. The library turnout was major, and the members of the Illinois Education Association claimed that the estimated 350,000 members of the library community who voted was the critical difference in Howlett's defeat.

The achievement of Illinois' library systems is monumental. Perhaps one or two systems nationally have equaled ours, but certainly none has exceeded our record. Still, I have a few "I wished":

- Had the original study leading to the establishment of systems been based upon a socio-economic delineation of "natural" regions, there might have been less opportunism in their creation, and there would have been a better service basis for the system realignments and consolidations of the recent years.
- Assuming, as I do, that system board members have a significant role in system maintenance and development, the obstacles to their participation— logistics (meeting arrangements, travel problems, etc.), tradition, limited socialization, trustee training— generally have received little, if any, attention. This is a place for state leadership.
- If cooperation is such a good thing for system members, why have not systems themselves exemplified cooperation with each other? The few efforts made in this direction generally have had only local success.
- The presence of a polarization along geographical-political lines (Chicago city, Chicago suburban metro, downstate— the rest of the state) undoubtedly was felt covertly, but wasn't to my knowledge admitted or addressed. There are too few of us not to hang together.
- With the expansion to multitype systems, we added an immensity of resources, both traditional and personal. Is there a program that's aggressively working to exploit these expanded resources?
- When a library system's board has to hire a system director, where can a board go for help? The State Library, with its legal position vis-à-vis systems, overview, resources, collective

experiences and out of state contacts, is a logical choice for putting together the advisory (not selective) team for this very special task of helping to fill the very special position of system director.

- AND, who promotes the combined resources and services that have been built over these 40 years? While systems themselves are becoming better about promoting their services locally, and the Illinois State Library and the Illinois Library Association promote their own services, who is taking responsibility for promoting the incredible structure of access that all of this cooperation and working together represents? Who is promoting the fabulous IT to the residents of Illinois and to the rest of the library world?

“If you stop or slow down, you’ll actually start moving backwards”

by Bridget Lamont

(Bridget Lamont served as director of the Illinois State Library from 1984 to 1999.)

While the month of January represents the beginning of a new year, September, for me, has that same sense of new beginnings. A change of seasons; back to school; football anticipation; and as the precursor to the fall and winter holidays. In 1972, September was the beginning of a new career at the Illinois State Library for my colleague, Travis Tyer and me. And, like students beginning the school year, we were immediately immersed in new programs. In our case, it was the second week of work and we were advised we would be attending-no, not attending- but *participating* in the meeting of the Illinois library systems’ directors and presidents. And that was our orientation!

We didn’t know much about library systems. Travis came to Illinois via Texas and Florida, and although I had always lived in Illinois, library systems were unknown to me except for brief mention in the library school curriculum. But from the activity around us in preparation for the meeting, we realized this was a “big thing.” Each library development group consultant was scheduled to make a presentation on an issue for discussion with the system directors and presidents. Other administrative staff was to provide presentations on operations at the State Library that would impact the systems and statewide library development.

During one of the advance meetings, I was told I would be announcing a program of regional book review centers for the systems, and was asked to prepare supporting information and procedures. Al Trezza, the State Library’s energetic director, told me that grants would be provided to the systems to assist them in establishing these centers and that I should be sure and indicate that in my presentation. I forgot (!) and Al, in a loud stage whisper, reminded me I had forgotten to announce one of the major pieces of the program—the money!

That September meeting is still so vivid in my memory, and it so influenced my thinking about library cooperation and development. We were all immersed in actively promoting and developing, it was some time before I even read the Plan for Public Library Development in Illinois, or as we knew it, the “Rohlf Plan.” We were too intent on the implementation of the plan. Success demanded an alliance between the State Library and the systems and subsequent support and cooperation among Illinois libraries.

I saw Al Trezza and Alex Ladenson (Director of the Chicago Public Library) go head to head on issues of local library law and control. Les Stoffel and Bob McClarren (Suburban and North Suburban Library Systems) were a constant tag team offering insightful ideas and repartee as they worked with the dynamic growth of libraries in the suburbs. Jim Ubel (Shawnee Library System) and Bob McClarren played their roles well in bringing to life the twin funding sources for systems-area and per capita grants: how to best count the trees in the Shawnee National Forest and rural southern Illinois, versus the population shifts to Lake and, McHenry counties? Stillman Taylor (Great River Library System) was a forceful advocate for “his” libraries and telling Al Trezza when he had had enough of the meeting.

These directors and their board presidents came to the meetings with a keen understanding of the needs of their local libraries; a commitment to library development for all of Illinois; mutual support for each other; an appreciation of the differences among the library systems; confidence to innovate; willingness to challenge; and a surety that library systems would make a difference for library services in Illinois.

These meetings were a “big thing” since it was the directors of the library systems, the members of the public who served as the chairs of the systems’ boards of directors, and the State Library administrative and library development team who carried the front line responsibility for the implementation of the promise of the library systems. The roles varied from day to day and library to library as marketers, financial experts, counselors, consultants, guides, listeners, promoters, drivers, teachers, leaders, dealmakers and negotiators. Certainly in the early years much of their work was driven by their relationships with the local public libraries and later academic, school and corporate libraries. For the library systems and ultimately the Illinois Library and Information Network (ILLINET) to mature into its full potential, we all had to follow the adage, “if you stop or slow down, you’ll actually start moving backwards.” In fact, the significant momentum of the first 20-25 years of library systems created newer challenges and the basis for the “provider vs. facilitator” philosophy of the systems.

Some of the problems identified in the Rohlfs report remain public policy challenges for libraries and library systems—funding; larger units of service for schools and public libraries; convincing public officials of the impact and potential of public libraries; strengthening the State Library; maximizing the role of local library trustees; and utilizing new strategies and techniques for making libraries’ materials and information available to all the citizens of Illinois. Forty years ago the Rohlfs report envisioned library systems as “a library’s library.”

Systems have certainly evolved well beyond that, and forty years later have both an opportunity and an obligation to work with the library community to assess past success and determine “what’s next?”

Observations on the 40th anniversary of Illinois Regional Library Systems

by Jean Wilkins

(Jean Wilkins served as director of the Illinois State Library from 1999 to 2004.)

Forty years is a long time for an organization to exist and have continued success. I expect that forty years has different meanings to each of us. We equate the passing of years with events and experiences that we have had. We associate the milestones of life events that happen both at home and in the workplace. So when making observations on forty years of system life, many memories come back to me.

Recently I reread some earlier *Illinois Libraries* articles about the early days, and what it took forty years ago to get things going. I couldn't help but notice that some library issues deemed important then continue to be discussed in the library world now. I saw the words "cooperation" and "shared services" in some of those articles. Issues ebb and flow, but some things don't change. I'm pleased to share some observations on the systems.

Forty years ago it appears that in all parts of the state and at all levels, good people rose to the challenge and worked to make the idea of regional library systems a reality. It did take the efforts of board members, librarians and citizens coming together for the greater good of the citizens of the state. Some of those names from forty years ago are still known and mentioned in respectful tones for what they achieved. Some names are lost and likely to have faded from the organizational memory. At the state level, then Secretary of State Paul Powell and Director of the State Library, Al Trezza, a dynamic team, were determined to get the system legislation passed. The need for dramatic action was realized and a new model that has served Illinois so well came into being. I've come to realize what a stellar accomplishment passing that legislation truly was. To have all the criteria for success come together and become law is certainly no small task. Little did anyone know that the system model, so successful in Illinois, would be used repeatedly throughout the country to build new library organizations. Through 25 years at the State Library, I had opportunities to speak to some of those early leaders in Illinois library development. They were visionaries, without question, and I trust they have a sense of satisfaction and pride in what came about as a result of their work.

System services such as consulting, automation, efficient interlibrary loan and delivery— programs taken for granted now—were just ideas forty years ago. The library visionaries knew there were better ways to serve the citizens of Illinois. Some services became models and have been acknowledged as such through federal, state and local grants. The actions taken 40 years ago were critical for the development of Illinois libraries – all kinds and types.

The original number of systems (18) was deemed too many in the beginning, although there were political and practical reasons for the number. Consolidation occurred at various times throughout the forty years, most recently in 2004. It seems likely that consolidation efforts will continue. Factors likely to drive consolidation include funding, technology and scarcity of skilled staff – particularly in the ethnology areas. These are years of frozen and scarce funding for publicly funded organizations including libraries. Most library organizations, including systems, are looking for ways to maximize their effectiveness through cooperative ventures and partnerships.

To note and celebrate this anniversary, I have observed that:

- Library systems were needed forty years ago to push development of public libraries. Their creation brought a form and focus to that development.
- Building on the public library success, multitype systems became the model, and created a great

statewide network of more than 4000 libraries.

- With funding from both the federal and state governments, systems were critical in developing grants in the areas of automation, collection development, electronic resources and other programs that had great benefit for their members.
- Continuing education and technical training continue to be of vital importance, as ever-changing products and services demand new skills.
- At both the state and federal level, activism and advocacy has never been more important. It is critical to develop and lead system members in the role of advocacy.
- Providing a “local” perspective is essential. Systems react to local concerns, and systems best know “the lay of the land”.
- Develop cooperative programs and ventures that cross the boundaries in a way that may be seamless to the end user.

These forty years of development have not been without problems and, at times, some strife. As in any ongoing relationship, no one stopped believing in the concept of systems. System directors, their board members and staffs keep working to solve the issues and problems. That is worth more than just a mention. There have been lows and highs, but forty years later we have organizations of great strength doing good things for their members and the citizenry of Illinois.

To those who developed the legislation and made the System Act of 1965 – I say thank you. To you who are currently working in systems, I offer my congratulations for your efforts and abilities to continue a great legacy.

The Meaning of Delivery in Illinois

by Charm Ruhnke

(Charm Ruhnke is consultant manager at Lewis & Clark Library System.)

I love Illinois' library delivery service. I can request a plat book from I-Share on Monday, and receive it in time for study and research over the weekend. What's not to love? My ongoing interlibrary loan addiction is totally enabled by the Illinois Library Delivery System (ILDS) and Systems' delivery services. In fact, delivery drivers are constantly amazed what things are shipped to and from libraries within the state. We see rock collections, skeletons, DVD's, individual magazine issues (my monthly *Archaeology* fix included), puppets, Lewis & Clark kits, books, DVD's, audiobooks; any and everything libraries lend comes through delivery.

The sheer volume of material shipped by the Systems and the State Library's ILDS couriers is mind numbing. The numbers are so large they are difficult to comprehend. Between July 1998 and June 1999 the Illinois Library Systems delivered 13,951,105 items; ILDS delivered about 850,000 in the same time frame. In FY2003, just four years later, the Systems transported 21,058,160 items and ILDS delivered 802,197.ⁱ Mind numbing is right. To look at the volume in a different light, the University of Illinois at Urbana/Champaign has a library collection of over 9 million itemsⁱⁱ. So the delivery service for Illinois libraries moved the total collection of UIUC libraries more than twice-in 2002/2003. Puts things in perspective.

Why is so much transported through the delivery services? The easy answer is because patrons request to borrow a lot of material. The harder answer is that because of delivery's high reputation for accurate, convenient and fast service librarians are willing to share. With access to delivery across the state, resource sharing is relatively low risk for loss, damage and shipping costs. Items are labeled, placed in the library's delivery tubs or bags, and sent off to the patron; once finished the item wends its way home.ⁱⁱⁱ Over the years, several librarians have confessed that if the item is being shipped via ILDS/System delivery they are more willing to lend the item. Because delivery is simple to use, more libraries are willing to use delivery, increasing their interlibrary loan numbers. One of those cause & effect situations we learned about in high school.

The interesting question is how does all this stuff get shared? Delivery does not happen in a vacuum. Illinois resource sharing has a three-point base: delivery, interlibrary loan and reciprocal borrowing. Without interlibrary loan capabilities into the Systems' LLSAP's, CARLI's I-Share (formerly ILLINET Online), and the State Library's OCLC/SILC databases there would be few items to transport from library to library. Since the 1970's, when computerized catalogs and circulation software began appearing in libraries, interlibrary loan has increased. Since patron-initiated requests began in the late 1990's, interlibrary loan has skyrocketed, impacting delivery numbers across the state.

Delivery has had a curious impact on usage of OCLC interlibrary loan capabilities. Most Illinois libraries put their ILDS route number and/or System name in the 'ship to' portion of the constant data rather than the library's mailing address. Illinois libraries almost exclusively use the ILDS and System delivery services for the transportation of their material within the state.

For Illinois, reciprocal borrowing has also impacted delivery. Local public libraries are comfortable supporting reciprocal borrowing, knowing that if the material is left at any Illinois library, delivery will bring it home.

What has statewide delivery meant to collection development? Many would say the two are related since the link is so subtle. Libraries, regardless of type, continue to collect in their primary fields. But with electronic interlibrary and delivery services, librarians have been freed to create specialized, secondary collections, knowing their collection support and are supported by others' collections. An example from Charm, the genealogist: more libraries are able to support local genealogy collections, annually adding a few items to their collection, but not having to duplicate what the other public and academic libraries have in their local history/genealogy collections because of interlibrary loan. Access is available through the *delivery* of the book or the photocopy of the page.

A few historical facts concerning delivery in Illinois: Delivery first began at the System level in the late 1960's. For the Systems, this was one of the foundation services implemented after establishment. Delivery was considered crucial to support interlibrary loan and to build community among the membership. By 1980 a statewide connection was critical to transfer material between the academic libraries and between Systems. The Illinois State Library, using LSCA monies, funded a pilot delivery project called Illinois Library Delivery System (ILDS).^{iv} The project was so successful that it has become a regular service of the Illinois State Library.

Delivery has become so dependable and fundamental to library services that to even mention changing delivery in any way is to cause extreme consternation among local libraries.

ⁱ Source: System delivery numbers from ILSDO, ILDS delivery numbers from Mary Downing, Illinois State Library.

ⁱⁱ Source: University of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign website "History of the University Library", 9/27/2005
<http://www.library.uiuc.edu/learn/orientation/history.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ See Prairie Area Library System's delivery videos at <http://www.palsnet.info/services/delivery/default.asp> for information on packaging.

^{iv} See Doris R. Brown's article Advancing Multi-type Library Service: LSCA Title III Projects in Illinois Libraries, Volume 80, Issue 3 pages 173-176.

Library System Automation Projects: A Summary of Development and Speculation on Future Possibilities

by Robert W. McKay and Mary Anne Stewart

*(Robert W. McKay is executive director of the Prairie Area Library System;
Mary Anne Stewart is assistant director of Technology Services at Prairie Area Library System.)*

The short story

Talk to nearly any baby-boomer librarian and they can give you a quick summary of library automation in Illinois, usually as a short personal story. For example, Tina Hubert, Executive Director, Lewis and Clark Library System reported:

“I started as a page at the Granite City Public Library, back with hanging chads courtesy of Gaylord stamped date due cards. All we had to rely on was our collection, through the cards in the catalog. Putting something on hold was a step below purgatory. Now, our libraries are not isolated. Fifty-five libraries participate in GateNet, our automation program, and our new resource-sharing package makes it easy for patrons to order from home, work, or anywhere. A dozen years ago, annual area ILL and reciprocal borrowing totaled 45,000 items. Now it’s ten times that level. As far as I can see, the “haves” will become “have mores” and “have nots”, will become “haves”. I am very positive about what we’ve achieved and quite confident that library technology will continue to improve customer service. It is truly remarkable all that has been accomplished in a relatively short timeframe.”

In the beginning

Library systems were established to improve library service through library cooperation and resource sharing. In 1965, the Library System Act declared that “Because the State has a financial responsibility in promoting public education, and because the public library is a vital agency serving all levels of the educational process, it is hereby declared the policy of the state is to encourage the improvement of free public libraries and to encourage cooperation among all types of libraries in promoting the sharing of library resources. In keeping with this policy, provision is hereby made for a program of state grants designed to establish, develop and operate a network of library systems covering the entire state.” (75 ILCS 10/1)

In keeping with the intent of the Library System Act, early annual reports of eighteen library systems were replete with descriptions of resource-sharing projects that enabled resource discovery and lending. Systems established union catalogs of books, periodicals, newspapers, art prints, films and audio recordings to identify local resources. As soon as their finances allowed, systems began van delivery services within their region to shuttle resources to members. Organizational and interpersonal knowledge gained by library leaders through these early resource sharing programs helped provide the experience and confidence needed to establish the library circulation system, the precursor of today’s systems.

SLS and NSLS: Early innovators

Suburban Library System (SLS) installed a turnkey circulation system from CLSI in 1973. Nine public library members were initial participants. Only partial information was inputted, and later additional work was needed to create an online catalog. By 1980, the SLS system supported two clusters of libraries, eight in the south and six in the north. Each cluster had 375,000 titles and 1,000,000 items. The two circulation clusters were combined into one database in 1982.

After lengthy study by two independent consultants, North Suburban Library System and six members began the Pioneer Cooperative Computer On-line Circulation System in 1974. The CLSI LIBS 100 system cost \$140,500 and was financed by NSLS with the understanding the six libraries would repay the system over the next five years. The project was originally housed and operated at the Northbrook Public Library and went live in 1975. By 1979, when site and operational responsibility were transferred to NSLS, 17 libraries participated. In 1987, Cooperative Computer Services (CCS) and NSLS amicably parted and CCS began operating autonomously as an Intergovernmental Instrumentality, while maintaining a close working relationship with NSLS.

Support Unit Agreements

The minicomputers, software, telecommunications equipment, and telecommunications lines used by these pioneers were very expensive. One of the financial innovations used by CLSI and DLS, NSLS, and SLS was called a “support unit agreement”.

Richard Shurman, Director, Cooperative Computer Services, recalls the importance of these agreements.

“Support unit agreements enabled libraries participating in a project to purchase the central site resources needed to support a terminal for a stipulated price, often thousand of dollars per supported terminal. In absence of this type of financing and operating plan, consortia members had to make a contractual commitment to purchase a system designed to support a specific number of terminals. Expanding beyond the limit of the system required purchasing capacity in increments, usually in multiples of 16, and often required hundreds of thousands of dollars. That meant either purchasing what was needed at the moment, knowing that growth would bring frequent upgrades often requiring financing on short notice, or having to anticipate that growth by seriously over-purchasing hardware, which was costly and unduly burdensome for the present participants in a consortium. By allowing new or existing participants to purchase needed capacity incrementally, the support unit agreements enabled projects to grow more fluidly, and were a powerful stimulus for growth when equipment costs were very high.

“I believe Bob McClarren, then System Director at NSLS, worked with Jane Burke of CLSI to develop support unit agreements. Whether it was Bob, or Les Stoffel, then System Director at SLS, I’m not positive. I do know it made a difference. I know it was used at DLS where I worked for a while and that it was used in the early days by other systems in Illinois to get a start on very capital intensive projects.”

Innovation Spreads

Interest in cooperative library automation programs grew statewide and was supported by the Illinois State Library that began providing Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) grants to assist with start-up expenses. By the mid to late 1980s, with assistance from these grants, the remaining sixteen systems were in the process of beginning operations or operated “integrated library systems” for their members.

Joe Harris, Executive Director, Shawnee Library Systems remembers the importance of these grants.

“The automation start-up grants from the State Library enabled each system to purchase an integrated library system for use with its members – provided it could find enough libraries interested in participating and could figure out how to pay the ongoing expenses. At that time equipment was very expensive. A system for 20 small and medium-sized libraries might cost \$500,000. I still remember the cost of the disk drives for our first system was \$25,000, for what I think was one 300 mb drive. Then again, dumb terminals could be in the \$2,000 range.

Explaining to rural telephone companies that you wanted a dedicated phone line for a computer was sometimes quite a challenge. The State Library used a formula that provided funding based on the number of participants and items in their collections. The formula helped libraries see how valuable it was to work together because more libraries and more materials meant larger start-up grants so less money needed to be raised locally at start-up and more libraries could share on-going costs. I was at the Cumberland Trail Library System (Flora) then and I know it would have been difficult to establish a consortium without that initial grant. As it was, we established a group that had excellent multi-type participation from the very beginning.”

In addition to the financial assistance LSCA funding provided for start-up expenses, systems were beginning to provide intra-system delivery services to support library-to-library resource sharing in the mid and late ‘70s. The “FY 1988 Illinois Library System Directors Organization Report” issue in January 1987 reported that,

“Demand for more frequent delivery is correlative with participation in library system automation projects.Effective routine inter and intrasystem delivery has supplied the reliable, low cost means for physical delivery needed to compliment the improvements in communications. ...In FY1976, library systems made 75,400 stops at 584 libraries. In FY 1986, systems reported making 130,550 stops at 944 libraries.”

By way of comparison, the FY 2005 operating statistics showed library systems drove 1.75 million miles, delivering 9 million items through 182,514 stops at libraries.

Shirley May Byrnes, Executive Director, DuPage Library System (DLS) commented,

“I worked at Great River Library System in the mid ‘60s and Rolling Prairie in the ‘70s. Shared integrated library systems came into Illinois while I was at RPLS and resource sharing exploded. No one at that time could have anticipated the growth in the volume of materials flowing among individual libraries of all types throughout the state. Today our delivery staff routinely uses hand trucks to get materials into and out of our member libraries, and some libraries in DLS get delivery twice a day due to the volume. Patron initiated holds and speedy, reliable delivery have been a real hit with library customers. DLS delivered 1.7 million items in the past year. I ‘m impressed with what we’ve accomplished and excited about what the future holds for library customers.”

Alice Calabrese, Executive Director, Metropolitan Library System added,

“Eight-six very active libraries participate in SWAN. No matter how you cut it, our libraries really appreciate and value our delivery service. Last year, we moved over 1.6 million items and made nearly 30,000 stops. Probably 75 % of our volume supports the SWAN libraries. I’m very proud of all the innovative things our system does. We have excellent continuing education programs and an exceptionally good library consulting and planning staff. But because library resource sharing touches so many staff members at so many of our libraries, I know many member library staff see delivery as our most valuable service.”

Multi-system projects

In order to create stronger projects, six systems (Kaskaskia, Lewis and Clark, Corn Belt, Great River, Illinois Valley, and Western Illinois) chose to develop projects with one or more neighbor. The Resource Sharing Alliance of West Central Illinois (RSA) was the cooperative project under taken by the Corn Belt, Great River, Illinois Valley, and Western Illinois Library Systems. The RSA circulation

system went live in August 1984. The project was operated from Illinois Central College in Peoria until January 2, 2004 when Alliance Library System moved to a new facility in East Peoria. Lewis and Clark and Kaskaskia Library Systems cooperated in a joint project named Kaskaskia and Lewis and Clark Interconnect Project (KLIC).

Speaking to the issue of creating a consortium that spanned four systems when it was formed initially, Kitty Pope, Executive Director, Alliance Library System said,

“Establishing the Resource Sharing Alliance of West Central Illinois was essential for the area that became the Alliance Library System. Originally, RSA had 16 members spread across four systems. Working individually no one system had enough members with enough financial muscle, bibliographic resources or interest to create a system. I’m glad my predecessors had the foresight to move in this direction. Now we have 175 participants in the integrated library system project and we look forward to a bright future.”

The River Bend Library System (Coal Valley) developed a variant on the multi-system project. The River Bend Project began in 1980, but due to problems with its initial, online vendor, it went live with a CLSI system in 1984. At start-up the consortium included 15 libraries, 6 Iowa and 9 Illinois libraries. River Bend had previously added as affiliate or cooperating members Iowa academic and public libraries, so libraries throughout the Illinois-Iowa Quad Cities participated in RBLs supported reciprocal borrowing and van delivery. Without the Iowa libraries, the River Bend project, Quad City Libraries in Cooperation (Quad-LINC), would have been very ineffective.

Mary Anne Stewart, Assistant Director, Prairie Area Library System, remembers:

“In the RBLs area, multi-type bi-state cooperation had been around since the late 1950s. Area libraries appreciated the value of working together. A group formed in 1978 to discuss a cooperative circulation system. The libraries were ready, but without adequate funding either individually or together. The advent of LSCA funds in 1979 was just the catalyst they needed.”

When River Bend joined with Heritage Trail and Northern Illinois Library Systems to form the Prairie Area Library System, 9 of the 83 online libraries in the system automation program were located in Iowa. The participation of Iowa libraries located in the immediate Quad Cities area is still welcomed. PALS is working to combine what had been four separate automation projects in the former three systems. A unified PALS project is planned to go live as soon as August 2006. At that time, the PALS project should have more than 7 million items and will circulate more than 10 million items a year. Overall operating statistics will be similar to the SWAN, the SLS project, which has over 7 million items and circulates more than 11 million items per annum.

Feisty 40

Currently, 733 libraries participate in LLSAPs operated by Alliance, DuPage, Lewis and Clark, Lincoln Trail, Prairie Area, Rolling Prairie, Shawnee and Metropolitan Library Systems. Statewide, 43 academic, 420 public, 229 school, and 41 special libraries participate in these LLSAPs. The projects have holdings information for 28 million items, circulation in excess of 39 million, and patron records for 3.5 library users. At a minimum, these projects offer circulation and online catalog services. Many offer additional content (book jackets, reviews, table of contents, author biographies), links to electronic resources (e-books, e-journals, websites), and patron notification when new items are added in a patron’s area of interest. Some offer the user the ability to simultaneously search multiple library catalogs, journals, reference databases and web resources with one query.

Where are we going? Resource sharing will continue to grow

Library systems throughout the state are seeing increased lending between members of the LLSAP. Generally, this is attributed to software that has made it easier for patrons to place holds themselves on items in a consortia's database.

Bev Obert, Executive Director, Rolling Prairie Library Systems says, "The volume of material shipped from one library to another has increased by 33 % since the system changed vendors 18 months ago. The new system makes patron initiated loans easier to place and make the whole system more dynamic."

Jan Ison, Executive Director, Lincoln Trail Libraries System, quoted an unnamed librarian in a 1994 *Illinois Libraries* article on patron initiated loan in LINC. "The statement sounds as true today as it did then", Ms. Ison said. 'We just need to get out of their (the patron's) way and let them make their own decisions'

Integration of services will continue to grow

Integrated library system vendors understand that libraries want their patrons to get access to all the library's resources easily and quickly. New software is making the online catalog much more than just an index to print collections. Illinois consortia are in the process of implementing software that will enable each consortia member to provide online access to the local content they create for their community and their unique set of publicly licensed electronic resources. The boundaries between formats are dissolving in the push to meet the patron's demand for useful information.

Paul Mills, Manager, Technology Services, Prairie Area Library System said,

"Our librarians have always excelled at understanding the wants and needs of their communities. The addition of WYSIWYG style software gives our non-techie librarians the opportunity to make their content accessible without having to become bogged down in the "how" of getting the content up."

Rolling Prairie Library System LLSAP Manager (name withheld) commented:

"Our libraries are looking to offer a complete catalog to their patrons. The LLSAP of the future will provide access to local and remote library materials, subscription content, community resources, customizable information-on-demand services, and other types of information that we can't even conceptualize in today's terms. The technology, as it evolves, will be faster, more responsive, and flexible."

Increasing the patron's means of access

Libraries are working to provide patrons access by the means patrons choose for themselves. Wireless or wired, microcomputer, pda, cell phone, you name it. Sharp people at consortia members and library systems are working tirelessly to provide access to patrons on the patron's terms, not just the library's.

Paul Mills, Manager, Technology Services, Prairie Area Library System said,

"Studies show that 85 % of 15 to 25-year-olds have at least one IM account and expect to be able to not only access our resources through the means they get other information, but also to communicate with us that way as well. We must never forget that we must also make it easier for our patrons to access our most valuable resource — our librarians."

Increasing the patron's interaction

Libraries will continue to work with their vendors so that the software they use to provide access to library resources will become more of a two-way street. Patrons have the expectation of being able to interact with our data and with us rather than merely to receive what we present. Integrating tools such as instant messaging, patron reviews, and patron defined tags will enable our librarians to be partners with their patrons in creating added value for the resources our libraries have.

Rolling Prairie Library System LLSAP Manager (name withheld) commented:

“The librarian remains a key player. The LLSAP of the future, like all automated systems, must always enhance the role of the librarian, not degrade or eliminate it as doomsayers have prophesied. The Google model is never the complete answer, because our patrons want to find precisely what they need and to find it quickly. In order to make that happen, librarians will provide and use the best tools at their disposal and will instruct the patrons how to make those tools work for them.”

Closing Comments

Several closing observations come to mind as we reflect on library automation:

Standardized bibliographic records

First, it will take nearly 45 years - from the mid '70s to 2010 - to create catalogs that share identical bibliographic records for identical titles. The recent move to require library systems to base their holdings records on OCLC MARC was long overdue. Going forward, it will be easier to discover all the bibliographic resources in all of the library system projects.

Linked systems passé

Second, on and off we spent a lot of time and energy talking about linking all the library system consortia for resource sharing. It is nice to think that the next generation of library leaders will be able to create the linkages we imagined with a modest amount of effort.

Staying successful means working together

Increasingly, LLSAPs may not be for every library. The average system LLSAP has nearly 100 participating libraries. Each year it holds scores and scores of meetings for hundreds of people from all levels of their parent organizations that work on a myriad of policies, tasks, and strategies. As projects evolve, they build on long histories of group decisions and strong perspectives of effective service. Participants recognize that they give up some local control but believe their library and its patrons gains overall through participation.

The trade-off of local control for the advantages of participating seems very favorable now. More computing power and more fully featured software from vendors offer more local libraries options with the established operating advantages of group programs. A high number of participants tends to lower ongoing costs of innovation, and provides patrons' with more library resources. However, projects with more options and collective resources challenge the technical, managerial, leadership and human relationship skills of the systems and participating libraries. Getting agreements on new activities and policy changes takes time and resources.

Library System Automation Projects will continue to be for those libraries that need one another enough to justify some loss of local control for the benefit of improving services to patrons. Projects will

continue to rely on strong people from local libraries who are willing work together to solve problems, exert leadership, and who can see a future where lots of people gain, not just the patrons at their individual library.

In many ways, group dynamics have remained a constant in LLSAPS. Strong groups have generally created strong projects. Going forward our continued willingness to work with one another will continue to be our most valuable asset.

ISL Grant funding contributed to two periods of rapid development

There have been two sharp periods in the growth in the number of libraries participating in library system automation programs.

1974 – 1987: Start-up

There was a sharp period of growth from the mid-70s to the mid-80s as systems through out the state established and expanded programs. In 1974, only 15 libraries participated library system projects in NSLS and SLS. By 1987, the number of participants had mushroomed.

According to the “FY1988 Illinois Library System Directors Organization Funding Report” over \$4,000,000 in LSCA funding provided essential start-up funding.

“Since 1974, all 18 library systems have become involved in library automation projects offered through the System Headquarters. Collectively, these projects hold bibliographic data on nearly 19 million items owned by 316 participating libraries.

“Participants represent all segments of the library community and consist of 234 public, 11 special, 24 academic, 29 school libraries, and the 18 library system headquarters. The participating public libraries provide service to 80 % of the state’s population taxed for public library service. A total of 1,154 remote terminals for public service and on-line catalog access have been installed as part of these systems.

“According to a recent survey approximately \$15,817,288 has been invested in equipment for this network since 1974. Of that amount, 26 % came from ISL in LSCA funds, 24 % for library system funds, and 50 % from participating libraries. (Numbers included the Chicago Public Library.)

“Since 1974 the number of staff members working on regional automation projects has increased from 6 to 63.5 full-time equivalents. Likewise, aggregate operating expenses for library system automation projects have risen from \$75,000 to nearly \$4 million in FY 1986. In FY 1986, participating libraries paid 56 % of this amount and 44 % was paid by the library systems. For some library systems, annual automation expenses approach 25 % of their area and per capita income.”

1993 - 2002

Another period of sharp grow occurred from 1993 through 2002 when Live and Learn Library System Automation grants and less expensive, more versatile Internet-based telecommunications teamed up to make participation more affordable for many libraries. In 1993, library system projects had 308 online participants. All 18 systems, however, connected to the Internet by 1995. By 2002, an estimated 80 %

of the libraries participating in their System's integrated library system service used the Internet to carry their communications.

Jan Ison, System Director, Lincoln Trail Libraries System, remembers,

“Between 1993 and 2002, the number of libraries participating in LINC increased from 38 to 73. During this period, nearly every library we added used their Internet service to carry LINC telecommunications. Previously, telecommunications cost would have made participation impossible for at least 50 % of these libraries.

“In addition, between 1995 and 2001, the Illinois State Library made non-competitive grants of \$100,000 per year to each System to help with automation activities. In Lincoln Trail, we were able to use the lion's share of these grants to help libraries with LINC start-up expenses. I suspect 20 of these participants might not be with us today without this financial assistance.”

Bev Obert, Executive Director, Rolling Prairie Library System, tells a similar story,

“Between 1993 and 2003, the number of libraries participating in our LLSAP increased from 24 to 82. Live and Learn Library System Automation grant funding really helped the system keep the operating costs down and helped libraries with start-up costs. Also, about 20 school districts were simply ready for new library operations software and the availability of a library system program supported by lower telecommunications costs proved very timely. It was a very exciting period at the system headquarters and for our members.”

Creating a shared LLSAP contributed to merger of Cumberland Trail and Shawnee Library Systems in 1992

Many Illinois librarians know that cooperating in the Resource Sharing Alliance of West Central Illinois contributed to the merger of the four systems that became the Alliance Library System in 1994. It's less well known that the first merger of the original 18 systems was Cumberland Trail Library System (Flora) and Shawnee Library System (Carterville). These systems merged July 1, 1992.

According to Joe Harris, Executive Director, Shawnee Library System and former Cumberland Trail Library System staff member,

“Prior to merging, our library automation programs the Cumberland Trail and Shawnee Library System automation programs ran on nearly parallel tracks. Each system established an LLSAP in 1983 using DATAPHASE, Inc. software with the help of a start-up grant from the Illinois State Library. Each system had very good participation in their projects from area community colleges and larger public libraries and schools. When the Systems began looking for a new vendor in the early 90s, we began talking about a shared automation project and that really helped us see how all our services might be stronger if we brought Cumberland and Shawnee together.

“Cumberland and Shawnee merged effective July 1, 1992. Less than a week later, System Area and Per Capita grant funding was cut by 33 %. Cumberland and Shawnee by themselves would have had real problems maintaining automation programs after the cuts. All but three employees in Flora were let go and four positions were eliminated in Carterville. Our members were thankful that we'd merged after the cuts occurred. It was difficult, but at least we were able to

maintain services. We combined the two separate systems to a new integrated library system that allowed us to continue adding libraries.”

What we learned along the way

Three studies set the tone

Three studies created for the Illinois State Library have had a significant impact on library system automation projects in Illinois. These studies helped to set the tone for how the library systems and their members have approached their projects.

The Plan for Funding Automated Resource Sharing in Illinois Libraries was created by a committee appointed by the Illinois State Library and published in 1989. It included jargon used only in Illinois: LLSAP (pronounced l - l - sap). This term stands for Local Library System Automation Project. According to the report, “Local Library System Automation Programs (LLSAPs) have been available through the 18 library systems with varying degrees of participation. LLSAPs are defined as cooperative automation programs, open to all types of libraries involving bibliographic control via logically or physically connected databases as defined by each of the several library systems throughout the state.” The report went on to note that library systems have a responsibility to all their members to “encourage reciprocal access to the participants” collections with these projects. Besides providing useful nomenclature, the study helped clarify funding responsibilities, reiterated the role of Systems to operate resource-sharing projects that supported all types of Illinois libraries, and suggested future areas of interest, particularly for grant funding.

The nature of the library system automation projects was further defined in the Standards for Services of Illinois Multitype Library Systems issued by the State Library in December 1992. The Standards called for each library system agency to have an operational plan to compliment an evolving statewide automation plan. It set “state of the art” services as a goal. It required each system to have a clearly articulated plan of service that supported the use of technology for resource sharing. Significantly it stated, “The goal (for bibliographic access) is automated access to all members’ holdings.” Some systems, notably, Alliance and River Bend, reasoned that the only practical means of accomplishing this goal was to include the holdings information for offline libraries in the LLSAP online catalog. Others, notably, the Northern Illinois and North Suburban, created separate catalogs for non-LLSAP libraries.

Illinois Library Resources and Automation in the Networked Environment: An Analysis and Recommended Strategies was published in 2002. Its principle author was Dr. William Moen of the University of North Texas. This study, commonly known as the “Moen Report”, has more than 700 pages and includes a comprehensive analysis of each library system’s LLSAP. While the State Library and library systems are still working on many of its recommendations, it created the analysis and justification needed for the State Library to push the systems to utilize only OCLC MARC records in their LLSAPs. Indeed, as of 2003, library systems must have OCLC MARC bibliographic records to receive discretionary State Library grants. In addition, the State Library established three Cataloging Maintenance Centers whose task is to get the bibliographic records in each LLSAP to full OCLC MARC. The Moen report argues that by creating LLSAPs that contain only standard OCLC MARC records, library resource sharing in Illinois will be improved and fundamental project interoperability will be improved dramatically.

Anne Craig, currently Director, Illinois State Library, was point person for the Moen study when it was undertaken. Ms. Craig believes we are just beginning to see the fruits of the Moen study.

“The Moen Study was the catalyst for improving the interoperability of the LLSAP catalogs and accelerating greater collaboration between the Illinois’ Regional Library Systems.”

Linked Systems – The Dream and The Reality

As the effectiveness of the regional online consortia became more widely recognized, there was interest regionally and at the Illinois State Library to gain ready access to all holdings quickly and efficiently. Kathleen Bloomberg, Associate Director of Operations, Illinois State Library was involved in these efforts and remembers them in the following piece.

Statewide access to Illinois library materials became a goal as participants and bibliographic records in the library system databases increased in the 1980s. The first effort to “link” system databases was the **Interconnect** program, which utilized dial access by staff members of other library systems and the Library Computer System (LCS) academic libraries. According to historical files, “The Interconnect Program is the Illinois State Library’s program in which the various library computer systems operated by the various individual libraries or groups of libraries formally are interconnected. This interconnection is for the purpose of sharing data on the library system resources held by and available from the respective computerized library systems participating in the Program.”¹

Schedules were set up for when various library system interlibrary loan staff members could dial into other databases. Generally only one port was available per library system database, with the cost of the port paid by federal funds from the Illinois State Library. From the outset the telecommunications costs and the varying settings for computer terminals to access the various databases hindered the program. By 1985, talk centered on whether the scheduled dial-up times should be kept or if open access would work better. The Interconnect program was the best possible alternative at the time, although it became increasingly problematic to keep the dial-up access working through numerous software upgrades. Discussions soon turned towards finding a less cumbersome process for sharing information.

When the Illinois State Library Automation Committee developed its plan for funding Illinois library automation in 1988,² specific linking needs were expressed:

Linkages and Interfaces

Linkage among the disparate online systems needs to be improved, with work by the library community and vendors. Technical and philosophical ground has been broken, but the applications in Illinois as well as the nation are few and scattered. A major thrust of future Illinois library automation development and coordination is the development of these linkages and interfaces.³

The automation plan specified completion of workable interfacing among ILLINET Online, the library system databases and other major established automated systems by June 30, 1993. The IRVING linking project in Colorado was reviewed for possible replication in Illinois. In 1989 and 1990, Library Services & Construction Act grants were awarded to the University of Illinois to investigate the feasibility of linking ILLINET Online with specific local library system automation programs and several standalone databases. The project was entitled “**Linked Systems for Resource Sharing.**” A detailed design and system analysis phase began in the second year with a contract to Software Kinetics, a Canadian firm. “Seamless interconnection” and “Z.39.50” became the buzzwords, as the efforts to meet the linking goal continued. However, the high cost of implementation with a lack of funding sources kept the project from reaching fruition.

A confluence of technological advances in subsequent years smoothed the way for easier access to the library system databases. With implementation of Z39.50 protocols by integrated library system vendors and the rapid growth of the Internet, **VIC (Virtual Illinois Catalog)** was launched. Through a web browser, patrons and library staff members could search any combination of library system databases and ILLINET Online. VIC was rolled out at the Illinois Library Association conference in 1999. Persistent technical problems, however, led to a need to look for a stable successor.

During the same time frame, efforts were underway to increase the number of OCLC holdings for Illinois libraries. Through the back loading project, thousands of OCLC records were loaded into the LLSAP databases. When the Illinois State Library and OCLC introduced a pilot project to develop a group catalog of Illinois OCLC libraries, it was logical to look at this project as a successor to VIC. Following a pilot project, implementation of the **Statewide Illinois Catalog (SILC)** became a reality.

SILC users can limit their searches to specific areas of the state, etc. When an item is located, the searcher can link to the local library catalog to find shelf status. SILC implementation is free to all Illinois libraries that contribute their holdings to OCLC. Anyone in the world with an Internet connection can find out shelf status of library materials by easily linking back and forth between SILC and the library catalogs. Linking is a reality!

1 Memo to the members of the Illinois Library System Directors Organization from Robert R. McClarren, Dec. 2, 1983.

2 Illinois State Library Automation Committee. "Plan for Funding Automated Resource Sharing in Illinois Libraries." *Illinois Libraries*, Vol, 71 No. 3-4, March-April 1989, pp. 218-236.

3 *Ibid.*, p. 228.

NSLS Automation History

*(Mary Witt, assistant director, and Debbie Baaske, special projects coordinator
and Academic Library liaison, North Suburban Library System)*

There are so many wonderful things about library systems in Illinois. They truly work together for the common good of libraries in the state. The path they take to get to the common good is different based on the constituency of each library system. Automation is one of the best examples of this. It is certainly a priority for every library system including the North Suburban Library System (NSLS).

As previously mentioned, the story of cooperative automation at NSLS starts in 1974 when a group of six libraries formed a cooperative and purchased a computerized circulation system from CLSI. The cooperative was the first venture of its kind in the country. The cooperative grew through the 1980's and in 1987 the cooperative and NSLS amicably parted.

Throughout the 70s and 80s, the number of vendors offering integrated library systems grew and many NSLS libraries decided to purchase their own automated circulation systems or participate in other cooperative endeavors. As the 80s had progressed, NSLS and its members came to see the System's role in automation as providing an interlibrary loan discovery tool that could unlock the holdings information of NSLS libraries. Combining holdings information and making it readily available was difficult since each automation systems had its own way of encoding data and organizing files. In 1995, NSLS introduced LIAison, a CD-ROM Union Database that included an electronic interlibrary loan component. It included the holdings of 161 NSLS libraries (multitype). In 1997, NSLS migrated LIAison to an online format.

When the Illinois State Library arranged a special group purchase with OCLC in 2003 for the entire state, NSLS libraries no longer needed a separate database of combined holdings. OCLC allowed libraries to have cost effective ILL and cataloging, and still have the autonomy of their own automation system. NSLS disbanded LIAison in 2004 and focused its energy on making sure that all members joined OCLC and received training.

This new arrangement is working well for NSLS libraries. According to Sarah Long, Executive Director, North Suburban Library System,

“Our libraries have never wanted a LLSAP in the traditional sense of the word. Nevertheless, they are strongly committed to cooperating with all libraries in our system and throughout the state of Illinois. NSLS will continue to provide them with the leadership and support that they need to maintain this strong foundation of resource sharing.”

Community Colleges serve broad groups of people with a huge variety of interests. It has been my experience that actively participating in a multi-type library system LLSAP permits us to supply different types of materials both in format and content rapidly and efficiently. As one who believes in the advantages of community thinking and “the wisdom of crowds,” I look forward to a plethora of new ideas and better ways to serve our diverse patrons.

Eric Welch, Library Director
Clarence Mitchell Library
Highland Community College
Freeport, Illinois

“The creation of the LLSAP dramatically improved the ways we could better serve our patrons. I consider it a privilege to have worked for two of the first libraries in SHLS to go “online” twenty years ago. Not only has the LLSAP allowed us to perform more functions faster and better, but it has also served to impress our patrons that we smaller libraries are able to keep up with the times and offer the same kind of service to our patrons that big libraries do.”

Linda Mathias, Marion Carnegie Library
Marion, Illinois

Participation in QuadLINC (the LLSAP of the former River Bend Library System) has empowered our small public library and made it act like a major public library. Instead of a collection of 150,000 volumes for our patrons to access there is a collection of millions. And what a time saver! In the old days, getting a book from outside our collection required typing (not word processing) request forms in triplicate and sending them out. Now our patrons can see the book they want and request it on line. Service is much more convenient, much faster and much more responsive to customer needs. My thanks to all the libraries in Quad-LINC and throughout Illinois.

Faye Clow, Director
Bettendorf Public Library and Information Center
Bettendorf, Iowa

“The Atwood-Hammond Public Library District (A-HPLD) became an LLSAP library in 1991. As an LLSAP member, the library was prepared to assist our school and community as we moved into the 21st century in meeting the needs and demands of our patrons during a time of diverse change in

equipment, materials, and formats. The readily available resources and the cost efficiencies of shared collections remain vital components to the existence of the A-HPLD today.

“The potential dreams of an LLSAP library can be more easily achieved and are only limited by confined imaginations. Our local library now contributes to the Illinois library community instead of only relying on collection strengths across Illinois.”

Marsha Burgener, Director
Atwood-Hammond Public Library District
Atwood, Illinois

I can't even imagine a library without the benefit of the LLSAP. I'm new to the library business (January 2002). Having worked thirty years in a large public corporation, I was used to having information and data at my fingertips. And I had someone else who worried about the databases and computers behind all that information and data. The library system and the LLSAP give the library and its patrons that information and data at our fingertips without having to worry about the database and computers behind the scenes. Patrons of our small public library are initially amazed at our ability to find items for them beyond our own walls. Then patrons come back with more requests and soon we're showing the patron how to find items for themselves on the electronic catalog for the LLSAP. We can then spend our energy on finding obscure items for a patron's research paper or special adventure.

Christine Rugh, Director
Twin Rivers Library
Colona, Illinois

“I've been in a school library since 1994 working with students from grades 9-12; our interlibrary loan program serves all the students, faculty and staff in the district, grades preK-12. When I began my job 12 years ago, our District was also in its beginning years of system membership. There was almost no interlibrary loan and research was extremely difficult. It has been a wonderful opportunity to utilize the LLSAP services in my work, and, as these services have grown and changed, the quality of the research and the complexity of the research projects the faculty are able to offer the students have both grown.

“I am always saying to my students and teachers, “You have the equivalent of the best college library at your disposal,” and that is because of the excellent delivery system developed for the LLSAP. I am so pleased to know that my students who go on to college are prepared to tackle academic research, because they have experienced academic research under their belt already through the LLSAP and FirstSearch, along with the education our faculty has provided them.

Elizabeth (Libby) Letterly, Librarian
Williamsville High School Library
Williamsville, Illinois

When the Joliet Public Library and the Burr Oak Library System began the LLSAP in 1978, we envisioned tremendous efficiencies, service improvements and resource sharing. All our area patrons flow across “boundaries” with impunity, the LLSAP makes the process supportable. Our Public Access Catalog has undergone 5 generations of improvements in scope and speed. One staff member commented recently that she still remembered the Card Catalog. JPL quit buying card sets and filing cards in 1981. How far have we come? Well, the boundaries have shifted and then shifted some more. Examine the present “catalog” from any computer via the web. Look forward to the new more integrated “Rooms” and “Single Search” product coming with the consolidation of our three LLSAPS. Libraries that haven't been part of a system project can join us in sharing and providing resources for

all our patrons across the whole top of Illinois via our system delivery. We can all join in providing the TEXT, the INFORMATION, the DATA directly to any patron in hard copy, in person, via email, the web — We strive to provide what our patrons are seeking — that is — to give them “what they want NOW.” Sharing the integrated Library system has enabled all of us to improve our performance and will continue to do so into the foreseeable future.

James R. Johnson, Library Director
Joliet Public Library
Joliet, Illinois

Community college students face time and mobility constraints in the pursuit of their learning goals – **time** in that they are working and caring for family as well as taking courses and **mobility** in that they are not be able to relocate to a residential university because of their employment and family commitments. Conventional thinking would suggest that their access to library research materials appropriate for their college assignments is limited to the shelves of their campus library. But the most significant benefit of our participation in our LLSAP has been the access to and ability to borrow from other libraries. Our LLSAP provides exceptional connectivity between our public, school, academic and special libraries. Our patrons consider us to be magicians because we are able to track down and procure the materials they need [thanks to our fabulous delivery system] – saving our student the time and travel to borrow items personally.

Charlet Key, Library Director
Black Hawk College
Moline, Illinois

For almost four years, before I became a school librarian, I was a prison librarian. Rolling Prairie served our prison and I handled the interlibrary loans along with the other responsibilities of the general side of the library.

I always described the library as the glass window of the prison, where inmates were able to access up-to-date information about the world. Interlibrary loan was a big part of the access, not only for our inmates who were working on G.E.D.s or college courses, but also for the inmate who was seeking information that could change his life, like the man I’ll describe.

In a typical inmate-staff conversation, several reference interviews occurred before he communicated what information he really needed. He was being released soon. His wife had told him that their son, who was getting ready to start kindergarten, had been diagnosed with mild cerebral palsy. He wanted to know ways that he could help ensure that his son was successful in school. Interlibrary loan of materials from our Early Childhood Prevention Clearinghouse were able to get him the materials he needed along with the names and telephone numbers of agencies in his home community that he could contact when he was released.

I knew that we borrowed a lot more than just materials for that inmate.

Elizabeth (Libby) Letterly, Librarian
Williamsville High School Library
Williamsville, Illinois

The past success of the RPLS LLSAP demonstrates that by working together, RPLS and the members of the LLSAP can continue to provide the best possible access to the System's wide range of resources well into the future.

Pat Burg, Museum Librarian
Illinois State Museum
Springfield, IL

Access to and participation in a consortial catalog allows the Library to act as a window on broad information vista, extending many times the potential value of the institution to its community, no matter how that community is composed or where it resides.

Sean O'Hanlon, Manager
Information & Knowledge Services
Deere & Company
Moline, Illinois

The Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library, formerly the IL State Historical Library, has been a member of the Rolling Prairie Library System for many years. I shudder to think "HOW" the Library (or any library for that matter on its own) would have ever been fiscally able to have such basic necessities as pcs and an online catalog, interlibrary loan and delivery services, educational and networking opportunities for its staff, and other "amenities" that we librarians now take for granted without the existence of the LLSAP available through our local library system. To my way of thinking, the LLSAPs are the "infrastructure" and the "underpinning" of the wonderful library services that we all provide and receive here in Illinois!!

THANKS to all for YOUR cooperation and participation.

Kathryn M. Harris, Division Manager/Library Services
Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library
Springfield, Illinois

Barclay Public Library was a member of the Rolling Prairie LLSAP before the term was coined. While not one of the original members, BPL joined at the next opportunity (in 1983) and the benefits have grown with the passing years. In the beginning, BPL was a township library, and the LLSAP gave us the ability to meet patrons' needs for information and recreational reading that was beyond our limited resources. That ability to provide materials to meet our patrons' needs is still the primary reason we are a member, even though our population and budget was tripled when we became a district in 1989, and has continued to grow ever since.

Resource sharing is a wonderful thing for small libraries. We cannot be all things to all people, and the horizons that are expanded through membership in an LLSAP are limitless. We have been able to provide medical and scientific information for patrons who were writing papers or presentations, thanks to the medical institutions that are LLSAP members. Students' needs for term papers or other research can be met by a few clicks of the mouse. Patrons who enjoy leisure reading are able to read every book by their favorite, or newly discovered author; even the ones we didn't know existed.

LLSAP membership is a true gold mine. It expands our horizons and our budget. In my opinion, LLSAP membership doesn't cost...it pays! Our library board has never regretted the financial commitment to LLSAP membership over the past 22 years, and has also committed staff time to committees to make that investment pay even more.

One more thing - the unseen side of LLSAP membership is its companion, system and ILDS delivery. This is the other key component that makes LLSAP membership pay such huge dividends in patron satisfaction. I believe that the growth and wonderful benefits of Illinois' LLSAPs would not be what they are today without the commitment to regular and timely delivery service.

Ann Adkesson, Library Director
Barclay Public Library
Warrensburg, Illinois

Trinity Medical Center has been both an offline and now an online member of our LLSAP. Our small special library would be unable to have a product such as we have with LLSAP membership if we had to purchase it on our own. Our membership has enabled our clinicians, administration, faculty and students to access information for patient care, projects, and papers. There always is something new to learn, which enables workflow to improve for the librarian, too! I'm also grateful for the technical support from our LLSAP staff at the system that helps keep everything "up and running" for us. Illinois is so fortunate to have the rich resources that we have in all of our libraries and a great sense of cooperation among all types of libraries.

Jeanne Gittings, AHIP, Librarian
Trinity Medical Center
Rock Island, Illinois

Standards for the Services of Illinois Multitype Library Systems

by Marilyn Boria

(Marilyn Boria is director of the Elmhurst Public Library.)

At all levels of government, whenever tax dollars are spent, there is a demand for accountability. There is a constant pressure to evaluate services and determine if these are the “right” services at the “lowest” cost. Library systems are not immune from this pressure.

According to Albert Halcli, the Illinois State Library’s consultant for library systems, “In the early years of system operation, the process of system evaluation was a relatively simple one. The Illinois State Library had set quantitative standards in its rules for system staffing, hours of service and collections. Since the system headquarters had to start from a zero point in these respects, their tasks were to accumulate resources at the headquarters so that they could meet the standards. By about 1970, the systems had pretty much met all of these standards and the question of continuous system evaluation first arose as a problem to be solved.”¹

For the next 15 years, the Illinois State Library followed an informal evaluation plan for library systems that was based upon a review of annual reports, budgets, and annual plans of service. Consultants were assigned to monitor each system and keep in touch with system developments. However, in 1986, with the publication of the first full-scale study of library systems by HBW Associates, *Vision 1996: A Plan for Illinois Library Systems in the Next Decade*, it became apparent that a more formal system of evaluation was needed. In March 1988, after statewide review and discussion of *Vision 1996*, a task force was appointed by the Illinois State Library’s Subcommittee on Systems to draft a set of standards for library systems.

This five-member task force,* with considerable input from all sectors of the library community within the state, developed general administrative standards and standards for specific core services offered by every system. In addition to defined standards, the task force provided a framework for each system to write appropriate standards for additional services tailored to their members. These two types of standards recognized the fact that Illinois library systems differed greatly in resources and in member needs.

The core services, defined as so basic that every library system should offer them, included: automation/technology; bibliographic access; consulting; continuing education; delivery; interlibrary loan; reciprocal access; and reference. The standards for each of these core services followed a fixed format: definition of service, introduction, administration and service, staff and resources, and membership responsibilities. Many of the standards included commentary used to define terms, explain the standard in more depth, and/or provide guidelines for the implementation of the standard.

As the task force developed these standards, it became apparent that member libraries had an integral role to play in the success of system services. Obviously, interlibrary loan could not be accomplished if libraries refused to share materials. Therefore, in addition to system responsibilities, each standard included a section on the responsibilities of member libraries. The standards clearly delineated the participatory role of the member library.

For many years, these multitype library system standards, the first in the nation, helped to shape the future of libraries and library systems in Illinois. When they were written, these standards were designed to be a dynamic document that would be revised and updated regularly based on the experience and needs of the Illinois library community. More than a decade later, it is time to reconsider the standards.

Library systems are constantly evolving. Over the past 40 years, they have responded successfully to demographic, technological, and financial sea changes. The challenge now for the Illinois State Library, library systems, and member libraries across the state is to develop a new means of planning and evaluation that will ensure a strong future for Illinois libraries and library systems in the 21st century.

1. *Illinois Libraries*, March 1990, pp. 217-218.

*Committee members included: Jan Beck Ison, Director (Chair), Lincoln Trail Libraries System; Marilyn Boria, Director, Elmhurst Public Library; Robert McClarren, Director Emeritus, North Suburban Library System; Virginia Maulding, Trustee, Centralia Public Library; and, Art Miller, Library Director, Lake Forest College. Illinois State Library staff members also participated in the process and were present at all of the meetings of the task force.

Multitype Cooperation – The Competitive Advantage

by Jan Ison

(Jan Ison is executive director of Lincoln Trail Libraries System.)

Illinois has a well-deserved reputation as a leader in library service – a decided advantage when it comes to attracting librarians to our libraries. The credit for our strong reputation goes to individual library staff and libraries. We have wonderful schools of library and information services for our next generation of librarians. We have world-renowned universities like the University of Illinois with its first-class library. We have public libraries like Naperville that regularly get exemplary ratings in public library studies. We have school and special libraries whose personnel are recognized nationally as exceptional librarians. The Illinois State Library is of the highest caliber, with the emphasis on cooperation and collaboration and a 40-year history of cooperation through library systems. The stories of recognition are pervasive, and make Illinois librarians proud to be associated with such great institutions.

Another recognition that is even more important is the recognition of our customers. There are not many nationwide awards that recognize this, but there are many unofficial stories that serve to make the point. One of the most important is the story that describes the service a patron receives in Illinois when compared with other states where they have lived or are living. The story goes:

“I just moved to the state of XXX and I thought I could get the same type of service that I got in Illinois. I can’t, can you believe that? In Illinois I could borrow books or CD’s from other libraries, and I could get things from a library no matter where it was located. Why don’t we have that everywhere? Isn’t that what libraries do? Aren’t all libraries the same?”

Or the story from a professional librarian who has worked in another state, who realizes that cooperation isn’t nearly as advanced in the state of XXX as it is in Illinois. So what is the difference? It is what Bridget Lamont, former director of the Illinois State Library, called the “Illinois Advantage”.

This Illinois Advantage can also be a terrific competitive advantage. That competitive advantage allows us to attract librarians from many areas. That competitive advantage allows our towns to attract new businesses. That competitive advantage allows our universities to attract more students. That competitive advantage allows our industries to remain profitable. However, there is an underlying value that cannot be missed. It is more than cooperation, it is more than collaboration. It can be termed interdependence — interdependence of one library to another, from one staff person to another, from one type of library to another. It is broad and it must be pervasive in order for the competitive advantage to remain. It is the glue that holds us all together.

Multitype cooperation in Illinois is taken for granted. It is understood that it doesn’t matter who owns something – it should be available to residents of Illinois no matter where they are and from the library of their choice. Multitype cooperation isn’t about the “big” libraries helping the small libraries; it isn’t about “my collections” for “my customers.” It is about the big and the small libraries helping each other and, most of all, it is about “our” customers. In a purely customer focused view, the best part of successful cooperation or interdependence is that it very much supports local interests. Hugh Atkinson, the legendary librarian, once hypothesized that a student at the University of Illinois could find 67% of what they were looking for in the University of Illinois Library. He believed that he could get the remaining 33% of what they needed from other libraries through either interlibrary loan or cooperative collection development. What he wanted was for the student to be able to get 100% of what they needed, and it didn’t matter where it came from. Atkinson believed in “enlightened self-interest,” which was strongly dependent on other libraries. That has not changed. Quality cooperative efforts are

built on local needs and, equally important, respect for others, with the basic principle that it is more important to satisfy the customer than to own the resource.

We have had this competitive advantage since the early 1970's when libraries other than public libraries were encouraged to "affiliate" with library cooperatives (systems). In 1983 Illinois made that official with the change in legislation that allowed for all types of libraries to be represented on system boards. However, this advantage that we have in Illinois, and this belief in helping each other no matter what type of library, is indeed a precious advantage that has to be continually tended, much as a plant needs tending. We cannot take our outstanding multitype network for granted or it will wither and die. There is always room for reminding ourselves that we truly need other libraries. For example, a Rotarian friend received a book from a small school district via interlibrary loan. Surprised, he said, "Our library didn't even have it." What he didn't say was that he really didn't care where he got it; he didn't say our library should have it. What he articulated was the surprise and delight that he could get it, and at the same time he gained some respect for smaller school libraries. He also did this on his own so he wasn't "encumbered" by librarians trying to direct him to another resource. The customer was empowered and pleased. We have to remember that as librarians we don't always know what's best for our customers. We may know some really good resources, but we also must trust our customers to also know what they want. It is a "letting go", such as a parent lets a child make decisions on his/her own. We librarians have to "let go" and let our patrons make decisions, and then trust our colleagues to also be willing to share.

Let's examine the value of interdependence more carefully as it relates to libraries. In general, the word is often associated with nature, the global economy, the environment and social interaction. It is the pinnacle of maturity. We start off as dependent creatures or organizations, then move to become independent. But at the point that we are fully mature, we realize that no one institution, no one person can be fully productive without assistance from others. Inside our libraries we talk and practice teamwork. With other organizations or other libraries we must practice interdependence. Our customers expect us to act like mature adults and provide library services far beyond what one independent library can support. Interdependent libraries, just as any interdependent web, are much more powerful than dependent and independent systems. We must work together to solve mutual problems; we must understand that we need to help each other. It is a powerful win/win relationship. Libraries have so many competitors today that we will surely be eliminated unless we work together to dedicate ourselves to library services for our customers. Once everyone buys into the value of interdependence, a synergistic relationship will develop; our staff, our boards, and our services will be improved, and our customers will benefit. In all of these relationships there are some key ingredients to having an interdependent library community: respect for each other and our customers; trust in each other and our customers; strong belief in customer service, an acceptable division of labor. All of this will ensure a win/win outcome for all library customers and will ultimately continue to give Illinois the competitive advantage in library service.

We recognize that in Illinois we have this wonderful multitype cooperative interdependent environment. Are we through? Can we quit? No. We need to look at other ways to expand and improve this cooperation. For example, the Texas Library Association no doubt has the best state library association in the United States. This is not to say that Illinois does not have good association, but what Texas has that Illinois does not have is an association where personnel from all types of libraries come together in a collaborative learning and organizational environment. Currently we do not have that in Illinois on a statewide basis. Certainly with the work of the Illinois State Library and library systems, we have that, but we do not have that through our associations. I suspect that Illinois libraries and Illinois residents would be better served if our cooperative efforts were more pervasive in our associations.

Finally, our competitive advantage in Illinois will surely go away if we continue to think of cooperative library services. Library systems were established in 1965 with the primary constituents being public libraries. In the 70's and 80's we recognized that we had to expand and move beyond our comfort zone of only one type of library toward multitype libraries. In 2005 libraries in Illinois have been in this multitype comfort zone too long. It is time to move on, and become more inclusive with other types of agencies that have information that our customers and their customers want. Time is of the essence for most of our customers. We must make it easier for them to get the materials they want more quickly. We have not made sufficient strides in this holistic approach. A recent publication by the DaVinci Institute on the future of libraries challenges libraries to transform from information centric to cultural centric. If this expanded role is to be met, we must be able to collaborate beyond libraries. Certainly this is happening on a very individual, or dare I say independent, basis one library at a time. There is not yet a larger more inclusive collaborative method to address this expanded role. With that in mind it is essential that Illinois libraries step up and meet that challenge and create as they did in 1983 a method of collaboration for all types of cultural institutions. Let's do what we did in 1983 when we re-invented interdependence to include all types of libraries; lets re-invent again to include all types of cultural institutions in systems. Let's not do this one type of library at a time. Let's not create more agencies. Let's assure our competitive advantage beyond libraries and help each other be relevant for the future. We have the best state library in the nation; we have the best network of libraries in the nation. Let's make Illinois the best cultural collaborative in the nation using our experience, our expertise and our dedication to customer service to move to the next opportunity.

Multitype cooperation is alive and well in Illinois, but the balance is delicate, and library leaders must strive to foster and nurture the clear value of interdependence. This must be done one library leader at a time. All of the great individual library institutions that are the backbone of library service – the library schools, the academic, public, school and special libraries—must do it. We must expand to other cultural institutions and we must think of all of this as “our” libraries and “our” customers, not “my” library and “my” customers. With that in place, we will expand and grow our competitive advantage.

The Changing Character of Library Systems, as Viewed by one Longtime Board Member

by Robert J. Kepka

(Robert J. Kepka is a trustee for Addison Public Library and member of the DuPage Library System Board of Directors.)

I have served as a public library trustee for all but eight of the last twenty-six years, and of those years I've sat on the DuPage Library System (DLS) board all but four. I would have gladly given the additional years if state law and my own personal situation allowed. It has been a rewarding experience, though sometimes challenging, and other times downright frustrating.

I became involved in system governance when system boards were composed solely of public library trustees. The DLS board consisted of fifteen voting seats at that time, the most allowed by law. One seat was permanently assigned to the "headquarters" library. (The headquarters library, a feature of the law establishing library systems, was responsible for providing advanced services, such as reference and reciprocal borrowing, under contract to the system, to smaller and developing libraries in the system's service area.) The remaining seats were filled using a rotational schema of library eligibility. Each seat belonged to the member library for the duration of its eligibility, so that if the library's delegate no longer was eligible or willing to serve, the member library could send a replacement. Most meetings were well attended by the non-voting membership and representatives from the affiliate library types: academic, schools, and special libraries. Those of us sitting as voting members tried hard to check our local library biases at the door. We weren't always successful, which resulted in some very contentious meetings, and some wounds that linger to this day.

Although non-public libraries actively participated on committees, and provided input during board meetings, they never enjoyed voting privileges. Legislation was enacted to extend voting representation to non-public libraries. The multi-type library system was enabled. Transition from a public to a multi-type library system required a conversion process in which bylaws needed to be revised, approved, and then implemented. It was a difficult journey for some. Giving up control, whether perceived or real, is never easy. But we eventually achieved multi-type status with three of the fifteen seats allocated to non-public libraries, one for each type. As the philosophy of governance changed, we replaced rotational eligibility with elections. The seats no longer belonged to the member libraries but to the individuals elected to the board. We intended to create a board whose role was to serve and promote the interests of the system for all of its members rather than those of any individual member library. Today our board consists of eleven members: a minimum of six seats for public libraries and a minimum of three for non-public. The remaining two seats are considered at-large and can be filled from either sector. Just a few years ago we moved from a method of like electing like to one where all members elect from the entire pool of candidates. In my opinion, we have finally achieved a process that assures a board committed to supporting the system's goals, rather than parochial interests.

Change, of course, did not only occur only at DLS. There were seventeen library systems in Illinois when I first took a seat on the DLS board. Today there are only nine. Most of the system consolidations occurred during the years when I was least involved in the library community, and therefore I was quite surprised to find that so much had changed over a period of less than six years. Many factors contributed to cause these consolidations. Systems were forced to change their missions due to the economic and political realities of the time. An early mission of systems was to develop new library services in areas of unserved populations. Resistance to tax themselves for library service among these populations caused new library development to wane, and reduced the need for staff involved in that effort. Systems, therefore, needed to focus on strengthening their core services—resource sharing, automation, and professional staff development—all of which are subject to the "economies of scale"

argument. Rising costs to provide those services, fairly flat funding for systems during the 1990's, and changing attitudes concerning the value of systems increased the pressure to consolidate.

Although it may be hard to imagine the State of Illinois without library systems, systems are endangered. When library systems were first established, they were viewed as essential components of the framework that provided state of the art information access to the citizens of Illinois. Today it is much less clear that systems are as highly valued. Rapidly changing technology, alternative avenues for resource sharing and professional development, declining interest in the library profession, difficulties in attracting and retaining qualified board members, the continued application of the "economies of scale" argument, and, most of all, the uncertainty of future funding are threatening the viability of systems. Over the past few years system directors and board presidents have met to address these issues. They have identified the challenges, and some of the means to conquer them, but a lot of work is still ahead. As we celebrate forty years of library systems in Illinois, we need to educate the public and our elected officials as to the significant role systems play in providing access to information to the citizens of Illinois. We need to work hard to strengthen the relationships between each system and their member libraries, and all systems with the State Library. We need to promote librarianship as a noble, respected, and adequately compensated profession. We need to make system funding more secure by removing it from the political arena and insulating it from economic fluctuations. We must be resolute in achieving these goals. The future of library systems in Illinois demands our success, and nothing less.

Near the Beginning

by Robert Lyons

(Robert Lyons is president of the Schaumburg Township District Library Board and member of the North Suburban Library System Board of Trustees.)

I was not there at the beginning, but I was there near the beginning and at least I was there with the people who were there at the beginning. In the early spring of 1969, I was elected to my first term on the Schaumburg Township Library board, which was not yet seven years old and had been formed to serve the new and growing communities of Schaumburg, Hoffman Estates, and parts of Elk Grove and Hanover Park. The veteran members of the board explained that as the newest trustee it was my responsibility to serve as the library's representative to something called the North Suburban Library System. A couple of weeks later and I found myself driving to the System office on Dempster near Central in Morton Grove on a Monday evening with a vague understanding that the state had recently created library systems as a way to help local libraries.

I don't remember now but it was at that first meeting or possibly the second that I went from being a representative to the System to being elected a director on the board. Of course at that time all of the members of the system were public libraries and only public libraries, and I think there were less than forty. The makeup of the board had a decided tilt to the North Shore, and my impression was that the majority of the directors were successful businesspeople. The president of the system was Paul Gorby of Evanston, and he was, during the day, the personnel director of Montgomery Ward. Another member was John McCutcheon of Lake Forest, editor of the *Chicago Tribune*. I will never forget the time McCutcheon missed a meeting because he had had to fly to Bermuda to sell one of his yachts. I thought of what a great excuse that was. At this time I was all of thirty years of age, a high school teacher and department chair, and I felt that I was in decidedly over my head with this group of important people.

But Paul Gorby was the director of personnel of a major corporation for good reason, and he was a master of working with people. Paul could have added chapters to Dale Carnegie's book *How To Win Friends and Influence People*, and he made me feel that I not only belonged on the board but that I was making a real contribution.

The system director, Robert McClarren, ably assisted by Bob Bullen, also made the role of board members clear in carrying out the goals of the system. I know that very early on I came to realize the state of Illinois had gotten something right in creating systems. And that alone impressed me.

Systems were there to help libraries; their mission was as simple as that. The state was never going to directly fund libraries across the state, but the legislature had been convinced that there was a role for the state to play in helping libraries to work together and to come up with imaginative solutions to any number of problems that would have been near impossible challenges for a single library to deal with.

In a world today where some libraries are actually distributing more audiovisual products than books, it may be hard to remember that one of the services of the early systems was providing movies on 8mm reels, and that was a reason for van service. The system also supplied reference service to member libraries and contracted with the Chicago Public Library to be the source of that information. A union catalogue was another project, and would facilitate interlibrary loan. And though the North Suburban Library System didn't see the need, I know that some downstate systems even developed a central library to make books more available to individual library patrons. Meetings and seminars were held at the system office to provide continuing education to the member librarians and workers. But the role of

the system in creating a reciprocal borrowing plan was the service that I would most remember from those early days, because Paul Gorby asked me to chair the committee to come up with the program.

Al Trezza, then state librarian, had made it clear to the systems that there would be reciprocal borrowing between all the public libraries, and that it was the responsibility of the systems to make that happen. The problem was that there were a number of libraries, and of course they were the libraries that would do most of the lending that had absolutely no interest in being part of such a program. It seems to me now that it took all of one year, as I visited one library board after another. I listened to their concerns, answered their questions, and shared with them the wonders and advantages that would come to us all as libraries cooperated, and let those folks from other communities come in to your library. I was told in turn more than once, “that they didn’t pay any taxes to us and would take away the precious materials that our patrons had paid taxes to so they would be available for their needs to be met!” And I would respond with, “Yes, but...” I wish I could remember all of the different arguments I eventually came up with, because there were boards and directors that I was finally able to convince. The one argument that I do recall was one that in the fullest of time would eventually come true. I know more than once I made the point to a library that knew more of their resources would be going to others than would ever be borrowed from other libraries by their patrons, that the reality come be that in time it could very easily be the other way around. And that would happen. As an example my own library was in the beginning a net borrower, but would eventually become one of the largest lenders and some libraries that were convinced that their shelves would be left empty because of the rapacious desires of their many near neighbors now have significantly more of their own people borrowing from those very same neighbors that they once feared. When the reciprocal borrowing program with compensation for net lenders included (so as to convince their taxpayers that they were not giving away the library) was finally approved, and with every library agreeing to the plan, I smoked a cigar to celebrate. I quickly decided that was, at least for me, not a very good way to celebrate, and it was the last cigar I ever smoked.

THE PRESENT

What My Library System Means to Me

The Illinois Library System Directors Organization established a link on their Web site at www.ilsdo.org asking members of the library community to tell their stories about how systems have impacted their lives during the past 40 years. Following is a sampling of the responses submitted.

We are a small library and part of the DuPage Library System. The DLS has done wonders in expanding our horizons so that we can better meet the needs of our community. From the excellent delivery services that send and deliver books to all of the libraries, to the tech support for our consortium's data base, the SIG groups that meet to discuss their relative needs (it's nice to know everyone has the same concerns, and new ideas), the support and guidance of the staff that helps with grants, legislation, library law and group purchasing. The continuing education helps us to be the best we can be in assisting the needs of our patrons. Thanks to the staff at DLS, we couldn't do it without you! —Michelle Drawz, Sugar Grove PL

What a wonderful celebration for the people of Illinois; 40 years of Illinois Library Systems! As a member of Lewis & Clark Library System, our community has many services they have grown accustomed to. Interlibrary loan with six-day delivery service and an automated database to browse and retrieve materials through are the most important and obvious to the public. The continuing education, support, and guidance that the Wood River Public Library staff receives on a continual basis from the System staff is priceless. Over the years, Wood River Public Library has grown, received grants, and kept abreast of changes that affect libraries via Lewis & Clark Library System. We wish to say thanks and keep up the good work! —Diane Steele, Wood River

How valuable is my regional library system to me? Extremely! My work is directly or indirectly impacted by North Suburban Library System on a daily basis. Whether I am sending a package to a fellow librarian via the System van, attending one of many networking meetings, soaking in information from the System's electronic newsletter, nominating a colleague for an award, posting or responding to a post on the Youth Services Community of Practice, emailing Sharon Ball about early literacy, registering for continuing education, or jumping on a bus headed toward Springfield for Library Advocacy Day, I am ALWAYS thankful for my Library's System. The folks at NSLS have helped me grow in areas of librarianship that I never thought I'd even approach. My experience in Springfield last year led to a desire to keep in touch with my legislators - so much so, that when I invited them to Special Education Night at the Library, they attended and remembered who I was! Library Systems in Illinois are the BEST! (Not that I have anything to compare them to, but who'd want to work anywhere else?)—Holly Jin, Skokie PL

I became employed as a Library Director just 4 years ago. Although I had over 30 years of administrative experience, my library skills were limited. The Lewis & Clark Library System has been an absolute lifeline for me! I am amazed at how helpful everyone at the System has been. I have always been able to get answers to my questions, advice, and support whenever the need arises. Additionally, the System provides our library with an extremely smooth-running delivery system, inter-library loan, ample opportunities for continuing education, and excellent tech support. Thank you, Lewis & Clark Library System, for all you do on behalf of your member libraries and their patrons. —Mary Kay Enrietta, Grand Prairie of the West PL

Systems and their respective directors and staffs have been exceedingly helpful in providing training, both formal and informal, to library directors and staff alike, and have served as incredibly useful

sounding boards for ideas re services and politics and yes, survival. I've worked for libraries within two systems (Du Page Library System when I first started out; a special thank you to Betty McKinley; NSLS for the last 30 years, a special thank you to the two Bobs [McClarren and Bullen] and to Sarah Long). In addition, Wilmette owes a very special thank-you to NSLS for its help with its Kenilworth Project Plus back in 1975; while that Project did not result directly in an expansion of tax-supported library service to Kenilworth residents, it was ultimately responsible for Kenilworth's establishing its own library district and contracting with the Wilmette and Winnetka/Northfield libraries for library service via a model tripartite contract. Thanks for a meaningful, exciting 40 years of service to Illinois libraries and to library patrons.—Dick Thompson, former Director, Wilmette PL

Growing up in Chicago, my brothers, sisters, and I had to depend on our Catholic School library for books (Our Lady of the Angels). When we moved to Addison, we thought that we hit the jackpot with a school library (St. Joseph) and a public library. As a mother, I realized how lucky we were to have the public libraries and school libraries that have supplied my family with books, cassettes, CDs, and movies. What a wealth of edu-tainment! Now in my 5th year as a Library Media Specialist, I think that the best part of my profession is matching books with students who say that they can't find anything to read (in the library!). Thank You ILS for making a difference in so many lives, both children and adults!—Donna Swanson, Wauconda Grade School

Illinois' library systems have always been a critical element of the strong library cooperation for which Illinois is well known. However, each year I am increasingly impressed and grateful for the systems' dedicated advocacy work on our behalf. Thanks for the advocacy training, for backing us up when we meet with our legislators, and for being there for us when we can't.—Ted Schwitzner, North Central College

School libraries - no matter the size - rely on Library Systems. I know, personally, being a School Librarian for four years, that DLS helped me out on numerous occasions. Hats off to all who are part of this worthwhile endeavor! —Pat Rambo, Carol Stream PL

I have been a public librarian for 12 years now. During that time, I have relied on the staff of the Lewis and Clark Library System many times. Without the expertise and knowledge of the staff of LCLS, I would be lost. Not only is the system dedicated to serving our library needs with programs such as delivery, inter-library loan, and continuing education, they also feed our emotional and mental needs as well. LCLS staff is always there to offer an opinion or to provide creative criticism for libraries with a problem or difficult undertaking. LCLS as a system offers member libraries the basics of service for all libraries. LCLS staff offers us more: their compassion, their understanding, and their dedication to all member libraries, regardless of size or strength. I appreciate both aspects of the system, and thank them for their good work in the past, and look forward to more good works in the future. —Sara Zumwalt, Litchfield

NSLS, How do I love thee?

(with apologies to E B Browning)

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.

I love thee to the depth and breadth and height your resource sharing can reach.

When feeling out of touch, I love your workshops to the level of everyone's most quiet need.

I love you freely when your van delivers.

I love you surely when you provide communication and network opportunities.

I love thee (and thy hard working staff) with the breath, smiles, tears, of all my professional life!

.and, I shall but love thee better during the next forty years.—Ranee Hudson, Millburn School, Wadsworth

Memories of EXCELLENT trustee training programs offered by NSLS, DLS and MLS. Thank you!—
Kathy Caudill

I remember well how Ray Ewick of Rolling Prairie Library system was so helpful to a brand-new librarian at the Shelbyville Public Library in 1974-1981. I also appreciated Jim Ubel's (ShLS) help in our Building Program at the Herrin City Library in 2000-2002.—Michael Keeper, Herrin City Library

I was researching a new career in Library Science in the winter of 2004. A librarian suggested that I call Karen Bersche at Alliance Library System because there was "some kind of program." The program turned out to be a collaborative degree program with Alliance Library System and Dominican University cooperating to provide a distance learning opportunity to individuals in rural Illinois. I signed up! I'll finish my MLIS in August of 2006, and am grateful to ALS for making my dream possible—and affordable. Best wishes to all Illinois Library Systems for the next 40!—Gail Hintle, Bishop Hill

I feel that the consultants at Shawnee gave me at least the equivalent of an LTA before I knew there was such a thing. They were there through both my undergrad and grad programs. Thank you seems such a meager word for all you've done.—Ruth Miller

I've been fortunate enough to work for libraries in three different systems and they have all been excellent. What stands out to me is how well each system tailors its services to their members. When I was under the old Northern Illinois Library System, they offered help and programs geared for smaller, rural libraries. Under the North Suburban Library System, the services focus more on helping larger suburban libraries. Like any library, library systems reflect their patrons and serve their specific needs.—Alex Todd (the Younger), Prospect Heights PLD

In the eight years since I've worked in Illinois public libraries, I've depended on my library system (NSLS) nearly every day for fresh ideas and problem solutions from fellow members of system-supported professional organizations and from system programs, classes, and roundtable discussions. The library system is my support system on the job. I used the system online discussion list this morning to provide a wonderful answer to a discouraged questioner! It's great to know I can call on this tremendous resource to do my best for my library and its community.—Susan McGowan, Morton Grove PL

Made a difference?! The library systems have completely revamped the scope of library service in Illinois since their beginning! They have brought us together with all of the libraries in our local area and state; they have made it possible for our library patrons to obtain almost any book they might want; and they keep us informed as to the most frequent trends and technology in the library world. They have insisted on strong professional standards, which give us clout when we approach our boards with projects and goals; and they keep us informed as to grant opportunities to help us accomplish those goals—Mary Lu Bretsch, Millstadt School Library

Years ago I was a stay-at-home mom with four boys. We went to the library a lot. The librarian asked me if I would like to work there 16 hours a week. It sounded good and I started. That is when I met the Great River Library System staff. They were wonderful. They encourage projects, remodeling, expansion, grant writing and library school! They brought me into the library world where I have been ever since. Even though GRLS is now part of Alliance Library System, the system staffs that I have met throughout the state remain as committed as that first group I met in 1980! Congratulations to all Illinois Systems on 40 years of great work.—Arlis Dittmer, Blessing Health Professions Library

Marian Catholic High School joined SLS over 25 years ago. The services that we have used over the years have enhanced the research capabilities of our school. Being able to request journal articles for

both students and faculty along with the other materials have greatly added to the learning environment here. Our end-users are always amazed at the quality of service that we receive and the materials available to them. Barbara Clark (now retired) has my undying devotion for always being able to find that rare journal article with humor and patience. I look forward to continuing my relationship with MLS. —Sue Silander, Chicago Heights

Top 10 Reasons Why Regional Library Systems are Vital in 2005—and Beyond

by Sarah Long

(Sarah Long is executive director of the North Suburban Library System.)

Author's Note: A list such as this is not only a very personal creation but also representative of a particular point in time. Interestingly, most of the items on this list would have been there 40 years ago. The examples would have been different, however, and certainly the order would not be the order appearing here. As per the model established by late night television host David Letterman, this list builds in importance, with item number one being the most important, at least in this author's view.

10. Serve as a catalyst. Staffs in Illinois' regional library systems serve as catalysts for libraries in Illinois. Think of them as scouts on the trail, going out, scanning the horizon and bringing back news of what is new and different and what the future might hold. When systems began 40 years ago, system staffs were actively involved in organizing demonstration projects designed to establish new public libraries. In those days, system staff were extolling the virtues of paperback books in libraries, using business automation techniques in a library setting, and cooperative purchasing and cataloging. Today, system staffs are urging member libraries to consider how wikis, blogs, podcasting, digitization and downloadable media can position the library to better serve its users—today AND tomorrow. They are recommending that staff in libraries of all types consider becoming entrepreneurial, learn about return on investment, and being effective marketers. These are skills that will be needed in the library of the future. Not all of these approaches will develop or thrive, but it is the system's role to help libraries think about and be ready for the future their patrons will need and demand.

9. Promote relevant standards. Systems uphold professional standards in many ways. System staffs apprise member libraries of the necessity of maintaining industry standards from the national and international level as a basis for cooperation. System staffs promote both technical and overall professional standards. For example, without the MARC standard for cataloging, shared databases would be very difficult. The Library Bill of Rights as established by the American Library Association is an example of a professional standard explained and promoted by systems.

8. Model and promote multitype cooperation. Illinois' regional library systems began the process of becoming multitype in 1973. Being multitype mobilizes all the resources in every Illinois library for all residents. As digitization and electronic communication expand, the possibilities of working together in a multitype environment increase. Systems remain the locus for both promoting the idea of libraries of all types (academic, public, school and special) and the practical vehicle where multitype cooperation happens.

7. Aggregate member power. Systems help members work together for optimal results. For example, most systems negotiate discounts or group purchases. Systems write grants, forge partnerships and organize cooperative projects that enable member libraries to do things that would be impossible on a smaller scale. Systems utilize the combined voice of all members in marketing initiatives and help members learn to tell their individual stories.

6. Facilitate member networking. Everyone loves to talk to others who work in the same profession. They not only like to interact, they learn from it, and the connection to others inspires the very best practices. Systems facilitate member networking by convening affinity groups, by extolling best practices to all system members for emulation, by promoting formal and informal mentoring, and by setting up electronic networking capabilities.

5. Facilitate resource sharing. Illinois systems led the nation in setting up cooperative automation systems that would facilitate resource sharing. The Local Library System Automation Projects (LLSAPS) are now pioneering patron initiated interlibrary loan. The Illinois State Library's initiative to help and encourage all libraries in Illinois to become members of OCLC has furthered resource sharing. Systems are helping to reach this goal by encouraging resource sharing at the local level. Systems continue to provide a foundation for resource sharing by supporting interlibrary loan and reciprocal borrowing. In the digital age, interest and use of these resource sharing systems is increasing every year, with no leveling off in sight.

4. Facilitate the delivery of materials between members. Each regional library system operates a van delivery service for timely, economic delivery of materials between its members. The Illinois State Library's Illinois Library Delivery Service (ILDS) links all system deliveries for statewide distribution. As statewide resource sharing grows, van delivery also grows, and this critical service magnifies in importance. Systems also operate electronic delivery systems—delivery of information via system Web sites and newsletters and delivery of electronic content with digitizing projects and downloadable materials.

3. Consult with staff in member libraries. Regional library systems employ staffs that are skilled, experienced, and people oriented to serve as consultants to staff in member libraries. Questions asked and help offered differ from system to system and change as libraries change and develop. For example, in response to ongoing budget constraints, requests for fundraising assistance has grown in recent years. System staffs are asked to help with grants requests submitted to the Illinois State Library, and to advise on other sources of grant funding. Continuing education programs are now being offered about how to raise funds, fundraising techniques and organizing for fundraising. The directors of Illinois' regional library systems have created the *Fund for Illinois Libraries* to serve as a 501(C)(3) vehicle for receiving grants and donations.

2. Lead advocacy initiatives. Advocacy initiatives have assumed a larger role during the first forty years of system history. Today, systems work cooperatively with the Public Policy Committee of the Illinois Library Association and advocacy leaders in the Illinois School Library Media Association. Systems organize legislative breakfasts and groups to attend Advocacy Day in Springfield and Washington D. C. Systems inform members about issues and help library advocates effectively describe library needs to legislators.

1. Improve the skills and capabilities and broaden the horizons of staff in member libraries. “Give a man a fish; you have fed him for today. Teach a man to fish; and you have fed him for a lifetime”(Author unknown). One of the major services of Illinois' regional library systems is professional development. This is accomplished in many ways, including in-person events as well as online opportunities. LibraryU originated as a system service, as did OPAL. Speakers and instructors might be system staff, system members, experts from out of state or speakers from outside of the library community. Content varies from basic library skills to trustee training, and includes technology skills training, organizational development, management concept instruction or anything wanted or needed by staff in member libraries. Over the past forty years, libraries in Illinois have been recognized nationally and internationally for their excellence and achievement. What's Illinois libraries' secret weapon? Ongoing professional development delivered close to home and as a part of what all neighboring libraries are doing.

Talking Books and Illinois Library Systems

by Lori Bell

(Lori Bell is director of the Mid-Illinois Talking Book Center.)

Illinois' regional library systems and talking books for the print disabled have been a strong partnership since systems came into being forty years ago. Today, regional Talking Book Centers are affiliated with Alliance, DuPage and Shawnee Library Systems. In March 2006, the Talking Book service, a national program, will celebrate its 75th anniversary, and Illinois, one of the first states to offer talking books, will have events all over the state to commemorate the anniversary. Illinois has a long tradition of providing library service for the blind. In 1893 a reading room for the blind opened in Chicago. Nationally, the library for the blind was established by an act of Congress in 1931 to serve blind adults. Illinois immediately became part of that national program and was one of the first 13 states involved. In 1952 the program was expanded to include blind children and in 1966 to individuals with other physical impairments that prevent the reading of standard print material.

Anyone who is permanently or temporarily unable to read standard print material due to visual or physical limitation is eligible to enroll in the Talking Book program. Students and adults with medically diagnosed reading disabilities are also eligible. Hospitals, nursing homes, schools and day care centers are all eligible to be part of the program.

The talking book program is a unique partnership between the Library of Congress National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) and the U.S. Postal Service. On the local level, each state handles the operation of the talking book service differently. In Illinois, talking book service is under the Office of the Secretary of State Office and the Illinois State Library, a relationship that has greatly benefited print impaired patrons in Illinois. Currently, there are approximately 27,700 persons enrolled in the program in Illinois – a record number– but at least 150,000 Illinoisans are eligible.

The talking book program in Illinois has been changed and adjusted through the years to meet fiscal challenges and changing technologies. Since January 2000, the Regional Library (Illinois State Library Talking Book and Braille Service), which coordinates all of the talking book services and activities, has been in Springfield. Prior to that time, the Regional Library was located in Chicago under the auspices of the Chicago Public Library. There are four subregional libraries (Talking Book Centers), which work under the leadership of the Regional Library to deliver services directly to readers. There are subregional libraries at Chicago Public Library; Voices of Vision Talking Book Center located at DuPage Library System in Geneva, which serves suburban counties; Mid-Illinois Talking Book Center (MITBC) in East Peoria which serves about 60 counties in central and northwestern Illinois; and Southern Illinois Talking Book Center (SITBC) located at Shawnee Library System, which serves 34 counties.

The centers circulate NLS talking books on cassette and NLS playback equipment, but digital audio book options are also available for readers who are eager for a transition NLS will make permanent in 2008. The talking Book service offers readers some of the most technologically progressive library services in the country. Readers in Illinois have access to the latest in downloadable audio books from Unabridged (<http://unabridged.lib.overdrive.com>). Patrons who do not have a computer but who want to try audio books on a small MP3 player can try Lobe Library (<http://www.lobelibrary.org>) which circulates books to the patron on a small machine.

Digital reference services on the web are not just for the mainstream population. Talking book patrons can ask questions on any topic by utilizing InfoEyes. (<http://www.infoeyes.org>), an accessible service started in Illinois which now involves ten states.

To recruit children and design a more “kid-friendly” service, the talking Book centers have a website

just for children called Illinois KidsZone – <http://www.ilkidszone.info> and a summer reading program which utilizes the statewide theme chosen by the Illinois Library Association.

The talking book centers have undergone several major reorganizations in the last twenty years. The most recent changes came about as a result of a study that took place in 2002-2003 and was conducted by Debra Wilcox Johnson. Johnson spent a year visiting the centers and writing recommendations for improvement and consolidation. In 2003, one subregional office closed in the Quad Cities area, and the service areas were divided between the remaining subregional offices. Instead of each center having a collection of old-time radio shows and descriptive videos, SITBC took over statewide circulation of videos and MITBC took over circulation of old-time radio shows. The number of machine centers was reduced from five to three to make operations more efficient. In 2005, MITBC, which had centers in Quincy and East Peoria, closed the Quincy center and consolidated operations in East Peoria.

A large reorganization of the service took place in 1988 when there were 18 regional library systems. Fifteen of the eighteen systems had a subregional library operation. In 1988, to improve service and to maximize the use of the funds available, fifteen subregionals were consolidated to six: Chicago Public Library; Suburban Audio Visual Service (SAVS); Talking Book Center of Northwestern Illinois; River Road in Quincy; Heart of Illinois in Pekin; and Southern Illinois in Carterville.

The future years promise to be one of expanded library access and services for talking book readers. We look forward to maintaining our strong relationships with the systems to provide even more Illinoisans with talking Books.

LibraryU: Committed to Addressing Continuing Education Needs

by Lisa Barnhart

(Lisa Barnhart is project coordinator for LibraryU.)

One of the major strengths of Illinois' regional library systems is the opportunities they provide for member librarians, system staff and patrons to enhance their skills and learn new ideas. Several years ago, a handful of regional library systems proposed development of an Internet based continuing education program where members of the library community and the public could obtain free, quality courses 24/7. The site would complement existing training opportunities, while educating library staff in both basic skills and new technologies. With funding from a federal LSTA grant administered by the Illinois State Library, LibraryU was born.

In its initial stages, LibraryU existed as almost a pilot program, providing a place where librarians, trustees and board members could learn about library issues and core services, while library users could learn about information retrieval on the Internet and at their local libraries. 10 courses were available to the public and another 10 to librarians on issues including budgeting, marketing library services, grants, obtaining U.S. Census information and using government documents.

In 2003, the Illinois State Library pursued and obtained a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to expand LibraryU and dramatically increase the number of courses available to users. The initiative (dubbed LibraryU Reloaded) sought to make Web based training available to all Illinois citizens.

In announcing that the State Library had received the Gates Foundation grant, Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White said, "Evaluations repeatedly show interest by librarians in obtaining more technology and Web based training. The LibraryU Reloaded effort will be a source of ongoing training for Illinois librarians, and is designed to become a training model for other states. If Illinois librarians can enhance their knowledge and skills by obtaining this multi-faceted training, the result will be improved library service for patrons. Web based training is especially convenient to library staff in small and rural libraries because it does not necessitate travel, and staff working in one person libraries will not have to close their buildings to attend training. The Illinois State Library envisions LibraryU Reloaded as a dramatic paradigm change, delivering innovative Web based learning opportunities to all Illinois libraries, their staff and their users. These new learning opportunities can be accessed anytime, anywhere, at no cost, no matter how many times users repeat modules. LibraryU is an investment in the future of Illinois public libraries and the sustainability of public access computing in Illinois."

Regional library systems were very instrumental in shaping the "new" LibraryU. Each system had a representative on the project coordinating committee, and system staff provided input in areas such as software selection, module development and evaluation, stipend payments for module development, promotion, and training priorities. More than a year of intense preparation resulted in the rollout of the revamped LibraryU in early 2005, promoted widely to the library community with the slogan *New Year, New 'U'*.

In less than a year more than 2,200 patrons have signed up to receive free LibraryU training, selecting from more than 40 courses covering areas such as administrative skills, cataloging, community building, customer and information services, marketing, trustee information and public sector modules. Individual interactive modules provide practical assistance in areas such as shelving, storytelling for children, weeding, fundraising, evaluating information on the web, talking books for the print disabled and long range planning for trustees. New modules are being developed and added on a regular basis. Internet users from outside Illinois—even from outside America!—have discovered LibraryU and asked

for permission to incorporate parts of the LibraryU curriculum into their own personal and professional development.

LibraryU is determined to provide high quality online instruction in a format that is cost-effective and convenient for the learner. Our goal is to meet the training and continuing education needs of the library community and those they serve with effective, online instruction available through the Internet anywhere and at any time. LibraryU is but one of the many innovative, practical, and progressive ideas fashioned by regional library systems during their first 40 glorious years. We look forward to strengthening our solid partnership with systems in the years to come.

NorthStarNet®: Building Community in the Internet Era

by Judy Hoffman

(Judy Hoffman is Marketing/Communications specialist at North Suburban Library System.)

Once upon a time, what were considered “the Chicago suburbs” closely hugged the city borders, and suburban dwellers regularly traveled to “the city” to earn their daily bread, shop and attend cultural activities. As farm after farm was tilled into subdivisions and shopping malls, and people settled further out, the city became less of a destination for everyday activities.

This expansive suburban landscape was a puzzlement to Sarah Long when she moved to the Chicago area to take on the directorship of the North Suburban Library System (NSLS). Like all suburbanites, she lived in one suburb, worked in another, and shopped in yet another. Borders were invisible and information on resources throughout the area was very hard to find.

This personal need was the genesis of NorthStarNet (www.northstarnet.org), an online community information network that launched in 1995 with four pioneering NSLS public libraries: Barrington, Elmhurst, Skokie and Warren-Newport.

Very soon the four NorthStarNet (NSN) libraries were joined by libraries in the Suburban Library System (now the Metropolitan Library System), and more NSLS libraries. Representatives from the libraries began to meet regularly with NSLS and Suburban Library System (SLS) staff to work on the continued development of the community network.

Each library appointed at least one NSN Library Coordinator (LC) to oversee their library’s community Web site. This included marketing NorthStarNet to their community and recruiting organizations to participate. For many community members, NorthStarNet was their first introduction to the Internet. The LCs helped organizations develop their first Web site and become NSN Information Providers. The World Wide Web was a brand new world with a new language. Working together, the libraries became fluent, and brought the riches of the online community to those they served.

Two smaller partnership committees were formed to attend to the many requirements of successful product development. Library directors attended to policy and legal issues on the Public Policy Advisory Committee. The Operations Advisory Committee, chaired by LCs, worked on a wide variety of technical and marketing efforts. These core committees are still active in the ongoing development of NSN.

Building a vibrant and current community information network takes time, and as we know time is a precious commodity for library staff. What would motivate 50+ NSLS and Metropolitan Library System (MLS) libraries to continue to work on NorthStarNet? For starters, NorthStarNet

- Places the library in the center of the community
- Positions the library as a technology leader
- Helps build relationships with key organizations, businesses and residents
- Makes it easy to move the library’s community information directory online and keep it up to date.

LaGrange Public Library was one of the first SLS/MLS libraries to join NorthStarNet. Library Director Steve Moskal was one of the many early adapters at libraries that saw the potential benefits for himself personally in addition to the library and community at large. “NorthStarNet has made sure our library is positioned as a technology gateway in the community, and has helped strengthen our relationship in

the business community. Working with NorthStarNet has also helped me keep pace with technology in our profession.”

In the 10th anniversary year of NSN, the NSLS and MLS public library members serve over 100 Chicago suburban communities. The aggregated site results in high indexing on search engines for NSN libraries and Information Providers, receiving over 4.6 million visits per month. This type of accessibility is key to NSN’s success as a resource to community agencies.

These days, most community organizations that want a Web site, have one, or at least know where to get one. While the function of NSN as Web host has receded, its role, as both an outreach tool and information resource is still strong. NSLS staff and the partnership committees work hard to keep NSN relevant and useful. NSLS has developed a new platform for the NSN community sites, called Community-in-a-Box. Using a database to generate the Web site, library coordinators can now build a community site in less time and without even knowing HTML. Many updates can be done by any staff or volunteer with one keystroke. NSN provides community members opportunities to share information virtually with Online Cafes, creating community dialog where there might not otherwise be any.

Many NSN libraries find that the NSN Community Calendar squarely puts their library in the center, offering civic and government organizations the opportunity to promote their programs together.

Tom Kern, director of the Wauconda Area Library describes why NSN has become a core service of his library. “The library has used NorthStarNet to its great advantage in forming strong bonds with all of our community’s most vital organizations. We are now getting requests from organizations that want to become participants simply because they don’t want to feel ‘left out.’”

With NorthStarNet, libraries can make sure no one is “left out.” A decade of cooperation has made Chicago area libraries and communities more connected, more informed and empowered to grow beyond their borders.

Digital Past: Opening the Door to Digitization

by Kay Schlumpf

(Kay Schlumpf is project manager/Web developer for the North Suburban Library System.)

Digital Past (www.digitalpast.org), the local history digitization program based out of the North Suburban Library System, began in 1998 with a grant from the Illinois State Library. The pilot project supplied 15 libraries with digitization equipment and taught them how to digitize a variety of items. Now, seven years later, it has grown to more than 20 libraries with 38,000+ items available worldwide.

Many of the original libraries are still active participants and serve as mentors to those just joining. After running on two different proprietary systems, Digital Past migrated to the CONTENTdm platform in 2004. CONTENTdm helped Digital Past make a giant leap forward with many added features that had been requested by participants. It also made the project compliant with a variety of standards, such as the Open Archives Initiative and the Dublin Core Metadata Initiative. In order to maintain much-used legacy features, NSLS staff improved on the base install with customized browses, searches, and library “home” pages. In their continued support of digitization, NSLS also maintains the Digital Past Resource Lab. The Lab is equipped with the latest equipment including a large format flatbed scanner, a book scanner, a three-foot roller scanner, and video and audio capture devices and software. Training in digitization and the use of the equipment is provided one-on-one. NSLS makes the Lab available to libraries in other Systems as well as Digital Past participants for digitization of their materials.

Since digitization of local history is a complex undertaking, many libraries have opted to join Digital Past instead of starting on their own from the beginning. System staff provides training in cataloging, digitizing a variety of materials from photos to maps to oral histories and video, and using the CONTENTdm interface, Acquisition Station. The learning curve is steep, and by joining an established project the worry is minimized.

Rockford Public Library, which belongs to the Prairie Area Library System (PALS), realized this early on after hearing NSLS staff speak to PALS members about the project. The Rockford staff extended an invitation to NSLS staff to visit and speak to their library about participation. PALS staff also attended the meeting, and was willing to work with the NSLS staff to get Rockford Public Library into Digital Past.

Several local museums and cultural institutions were approached by Rockford Public Library to join in their digitization efforts, and four accepted. Many participating libraries discover Digital Past is the ideal tool to foster relationships between cultural institutions. NSLS staff supports and trains the library staff, and then the library works with these museums to digitize and catalog their collections. The five institutions (Ethnic Heritage Museum, Midway Village and Museum Center, Rockford College, Rockford Public Library, and Tinker Swiss Cottage) have nearly 400 items in Digital Past.

Other libraries in PALS and Alliance Library System (ALS) have discussed joining the project and have visited the Digitization Resource Lab to use the equipment for their current efforts. The door has been opened, but as digitization can be a time-consuming task, it takes a while for libraries to be able to commit to stepping through.

But once they do step through, they find undertaking an established project catapults them far ahead on the learning curve, which provides faster results for patrons. Instead of months, or sometimes years, concrete progress can be shown in a matter of weeks. As objects are made available online, patrons are no longer limited to the library’s regular opening hours for their research. Digitization makes available

around the clock materials that may have been previously hard to access. Even if only a small sampling of a library's holdings is digitized, the digitization serves as a billboard to draw more people into the library seeking similar materials. Digital Past provides a win-win-win situation – materials are brought to light, but the increased usage will not damage them further; the patron finds information they desire, thereby viewing the library more favorably; and the library benefits from increased usage both digitally and in-person. With digitization, we all win!

Marketing and Public Relations the Cooperative Way

by Amy Weber

(Amy Weber is a consultant with the Lincoln Trail Libraries System.)

The many programs, services, and initiatives of Illinois' regional library systems have greater impact when system personnel understand their patrons and communicate what they are doing to the people and organizations they serve. Marketing and public relations is critical to successfully achieving system goals such as promoting the diverse range of libraries and library services, connecting people and resources, continually educating library staff, and helping people find the information they need. Like other system endeavors, marketing and public relations are further enhanced through cooperation, and take place on two levels: formal and informal.

Formal marketing and public relations result from deliberate and orchestrated cooperation. These formal efforts take on three major angles: promoting library systems, promoting libraries, or gathering information about the needs of library staff and the people they serve. The Illinois Library Systems' shared web site (www.illinoislibrarysystems.info) is a great example of a formal, cooperative, public relations effort to promote systems and system services. The site is also used to highlight special initiatives such as the "Fund for Illinois Libraries," advocacy efforts, or, in this case, the 40th anniversary of Illinois library systems. Whether it is promoting systems and libraries in general or highlighting a specific system project, the site is a one-stop location for information on cooperative programs and initiatives. The site is maintained on an ongoing basis. This important part of maintaining support for systems and promoting programs and services goes to the heart of achieving system goals.

In addition to highlighting and promoting systems and their work, systems engage in cooperative marketing and public relations to help libraries expand their visibility, thus further supporting system goals. Two particularly strong examples of this are Project 12 and advocacy work. Project 12 was the result of a cooperative effort to develop a toolkit for creating public relations materials. The electronic toolkit (<http://www.illinoislibrarysystems.info/project12/index.html>) enables libraries of all types, sizes, and budgets to create customized promotional materials. Additionally, the customizable materials are designed to promote the many wonderful services (interlibrary loan, access to shared databases, delivery, etc.) that are made possible because libraries cooperate and work together. The project also incorporated the American Library Association's national "@your library" campaign, to create a branded appearance and further strengthen the toolkit's impact. This project strikes directly at goals of promoting libraries and library services, connecting people and resources, continually educating library staff, and helping people find the information they need. If people know what cooperation among libraries makes available at the library, they are more likely to take advantage of those opportunities.

In addition to Project12, advocacy is another major part of improving library visibility (Editor's note: Lee Logan and Shirley May Byrnes have also written excellent articles in this issue expounding on advocacy). Because legislators have the ability to make law and to appropriate money, it is important to promote library values and ensure adequate funding by communicating effectively with legislators. Library systems operate cooperatively to improve, increase, and expand the impact of library advocacy efforts by providing a unified advocacy theme and materials for Illinois Library Advocacy Day each spring. More recently systems have developed a library advocacy card campaign to both encourage ongoing dialogue between library staff and legislators and to help libraries engage in a more unified, structured and collective communication with their legislators. This approach enhances libraries' chances of having an impact on the decisions their legislators make, because they are viewed as a community of libraries and library supporters, rather than as disparate individuals. Systems gather stories about library impact from around the state, and incorporate them into a series of cards with a

unified theme. Different library representatives distribute these cards throughout the year, thus increasing grassroots communications (phone/email/letter/in person) to legislators. Advocacy efforts like this continue to evolve in response to system goals.

Of course, as times change the manner in which system goals are achieved changes and, indeed, the goals themselves change. In response, the Illinois Library Systems recently embarked on a cooperative marketing effort to better understand the library landscape as part of the broader information landscape. The first effort took the form of a survey to provide Illinois libraries an opportunity to shape system priorities, future programs, and services by sharing their opinions and concerns. Formal marketing such as this is key to cooperation because it will provide a bird's eye view of libraries and library services throughout Illinois. If the systems and the libraries plan to work together in the future to promote libraries and library services, connect people and resources, continually educate library staff, and help people find the information they need, there needs to be a shared understanding of the library and information landscape. The shared survey will position library systems to meet current and future goals.

Systems also position themselves by employing informal marketing and public relations. Consultants often share information about what is occurring in the library community through email and list serves. They work together to publicize individual system programs by forwarding information to members through system channels (newsletters/system web sites/electronic publications/direct email) and through other networks to which they are connected. For example, two new readers' choice awards were recently initiated: the Monarch (grades K-3) and the Abraham Lincoln (grades 9-12). Consultants worked together and drew upon unique knowledge of their members to gather input, generate participation and awareness, and develop committees to run the new readers' choice programs. Systems also open their continuing education events to the members of other systems. In order to more effectively promote these educational opportunities several systems and the Illinois State Library, have deployed an online registration system (CLEO) that was originally developed and made freely available by Lewis and Clark Library System. Though they each deploy the product separately, their educational offerings are viewable online to any library who is interested. These services and tools may have been developed in one system, but consultants work cooperatively to maximize their impact by sharing and/or promoting them through a range of channels and ensuring that libraries, information organizations, and people across the state know of their availability.

Whatever the issue—advocacy, library promotion, understanding the needs of libraries in Illinois, or sharing information about system programs and services – library systems succeed by working together. Though the concept of cooperation is certainly not new, it is clear that marketing and public relations, like so many aspects of system work, are rendered more powerful and enjoy greater impact when amplified by cooperation.

Advocacy and Illinois Regional Library Systems

by Shirley May Byrnes

(Shirley May Byrnes is executive director of the DuPage Library System.)

What is an advocate? Merriam Webster defines an advocate as “one that pleads the cause of another,” or “one that supports or promotes the interests of another.” In its simplest form, advocates tell everyone they encounter about something they believe in and passionately support. It is done one to one, but it takes many people carrying the message to create a change, increase funding, or enact a law.

Library staff, trustees, and supporters have a long history of advocating for libraries at the local, state, and national levels. The first documented statewide effort in Illinois occurred on January 20, 1897 when a few librarians went to Springfield “in the hope that it would be possible to contribute something to the legislature’s consideration of some sort of library supervision for Illinois.”¹

The law creating regional library systems (RLS) is an early example of advocacy and cooperation. In other states, it took several years to pass such legislation, but the librarians in Illinois did their homework, and the legislation was passed the first time it was introduced. The measure was signed into law on August 17, 1965. Formation of library systems was on a voluntary basis. It took a lot of hard work and the leadership of both the Illinois State Library (ISL) and the Illinois Library Association (ILA), but the original 18 regional library systems were formed within two years of the law’s enactment. Although the intention was always for the systems to include all types of libraries, the original members were only public libraries. Not until 1983, again through a collaborative effort of library systems and members, was the law changed to allow systems to be multitype. Academic, school, and special libraries were added as governing members, not just affiliates.

During the forty years that regional library systems have existed in Illinois, they have worked with each other and with other organizations to promote libraries and library services to the Illinois General Assembly and United States Congress. The most visible advocacy effort by the library community currently is the annual Illinois Library Advocacy Day that began in the early 1970’s and became an annual event. Throughout the day’s history, RLS have worked with other organizations, including the ILA, Illinois School Library & Media Association, and ISL, to get the library community to come together for the event and be informed about library related issues before lawmakers. Since 2000, more than 300 librarians regularly attend Advocacy Day in Springfield. Participants meet with their local legislators inside the State Capitol and impress upon them how important libraries are to their constituents.

Many of the northern Illinois library systems organize busloads of library supporters to Springfield, leaving early in the morning. For the past three years, RLS have taken a bus of library staff and trustees to Springfield the day before Library Advocacy Day. Participants truly appreciate the information provided by Kip Kolkmeier, ILA Legislative Consultant, who speaks to participants and brings them up to date about current issues.

The American Library Association (ALA) has sponsored a National Library Legislation Day since the early 1960’s. Robert McClarren, Executive Director, North Suburban Library System (NSLS), 1967-1989, said that Illinois was not yet involved in the national day when he came to the state in 1967. Illinois librarians became involved a few years later, and now consistently have one of the largest groups of participants who travel to Washington, D.C. to lobby lawmakers. ILA coordinates the event for participants, but it is the RLS that strongly encourage library staff and trustees to attend. Some RLS provide financial assistance so staff and librarians can attend.

In the fall of 2002, Sarah Ann Long, Executive Director, NSLS, 1989-present, brought the concept of advocacy cards to the Illinois Library System Directors Organization (ILSDO). The state of Nebraska had been developing and sending library fact cards to their legislators. ILSDO developed a similar campaign starting in 2003 with the theme “Illinois Libraries Working Together.” There were twelve cards with a story on each of them from a library in Illinois, and a quick fact about library services. Each RLS found a library constituent to deliver the cards, one per month, to Illinois legislators. At least four cards were to be delivered in person; the rest were mailed. The theme for 2004 was “Illinois Libraries: A Great Return on Investment”. In 2005, the theme was “Explore Illinois Libraries”.

Each RLS offers advocacy training to assist people in contacting their local, state, and federal officials. Several RLS have legislative/advocacy committees composed of member library staff and trustees. Some have legislative breakfasts for their area legislators.

A popular new project at DuPage Library System has been the READ Legislator Poster series. The software was purchased from the American Library Association in 2004. The first poster premiered at the 2004 fall Legislative Breakfast, and requests from legislators to be featured on a poster have been growing. Illinois House Minority Leader Tom Cross was so happy with his poster that the Friends of Tom Cross ordered a poster for each of his constituent libraries.

It is vitally important for members of the library community to learn about advocacy and participate in advocacy efforts for their library. Talk to your friends and neighbors. Let them know what important services libraries offer, and how libraries are tied in to a worldwide information community. Public officials need to know that libraries are dynamic organizations, an important part of their communities, and essential to a democratic society.

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1 *A Century of Illinois Libraries in Association: One Hundred Reasons to Celebrate!* By Bill Erbes (ILA, 1996).

Library Systems: Disseminate, Educate and Advocate

by Lee A. Logan

(Lee Logan is the Consulting and Continuing Education director for the Alliance Library System.)

Forty years ago, there were eighteen geographically framed institutions called library systems. From day one, they were political; formed by law, funded by law; governed by law. Their charge was to facilitate library development throughout the state of Illinois. Over the years these “states” within a state consolidated until there were ten. The mission is still the same: disseminate, educate and advocate.

Illinois Library Systems have been sharing the word, teaching the masses and protecting the freedoms of the citizens of Illinois since their inception. It has been a winding path, sometimes one step forward and several steps back. However, over the course of time, the focus has always been on what lies ahead.

Back in the days of typewriters and carbon paper, the word was disseminated by mail and telephone. Systems developed “phone trees” to help maintain the cost of spreading the word. After all, it was “long distance to call your neighbor down the road”.

Throughout the years we slowly learned to think like politicians. We learned from our counterparts in education and business. We as a profession learned new terms like “return on investment.” Workshops were designed for member librarians to explain to them the political process and teach them how to “educate” their legislator. Systems staff talked about the legislative calendar, held mock committee hearings to show people what happened in the hallowed halls of the legislature, and updated the membership on legislation that impacted library service across the state and nation.

Library systems spread the word about fundraisers for legislators. They encouraged their member librarians to buy a ticket—go and show your support for your local legislator, develop a relationship with them, show them you are a key component in enhancing the quality of their constituents’ lives.

Legislative breakfasts were held in the headquarters and system staff enlisted member librarians, trustees, and friends to talk to local legislators about the impact of pending legislation in the General Assembly. Information was presented to the honored guests to show them the ongoing benefits for the citizens we served through the stewardship of public funds.

Library systems were in the forefront of developing a statewide advocacy day held in Springfield. Hundreds of librarians, trustees and friends, all wearing the “library hat du annum”, would gather in Springfield in the Spring to walk the hallowed halls of the State Capitol in search of a local Senator or Representative. Packets of material depicting the benefits of federal and state grants, information about the impact of pending legislation, and statistics on the influence of the library profession as an employer and business in the state were prepared for each legislator.

Illinois library systems are long known for their education and advocacy on the federal level. Illinois has had some key players on Capitol Hill: Senators Everett McKinley Dirksen, Paul Simon, and Dick Durbin; Congressmen Robert Michel and Dennis Hastert. The Illinois delegation to Washington, D.C. each Spring is consistently the largest delegation among the fifty states. Legislative information packets were developed for federal legislators as well. You could always tell the folks from Illinois were in town by the style of their hat. It may be a straw hat, a baseball cap, or a keystone cop style bowler, but it always made an impression and provided many photo opportunities with legislators and locals alike.

Over the course of forty years library systems have influenced and enhanced the quality of life of all the citizens in Illinois. Ideas like multitype library systems, district library forms of governance, public and

school per capita grants, thwarting attempts to inhibit information a person can read or access, Library Services and Construction Act followed by Library Services and Technology Act grant funds, and discounted telecommunications to equalize access to the Internet are just a very few examples of the impact of the work performed by these invisible folks.

So how has life changed over forty years? The young library directors of today don't know what a typewriter is, and think carbon paper is something that is used to establish a date of something old. Instead of phone trees we have electronic mailing lists. We can obtain up to the minute status of a piece of legislation by connecting to the Internet. When we leave a Congressman's office now and need to provide them with a critical piece of information, we use a mobile phone to call the eight hundred plus miles home to get the answer and have it e-mailed right away.

Library systems continue to do what they did forty years ago. The methodology is different, but the message is the same. Illinois Library Systems are doing what they do best: disseminating information, educating our membership and decision makers, and advocating for the rights of our citizens.

SYSTEM HISTORIES

Alliance Library System

by Kitty Pope, Lee Logan and Lori Bell

(Kitty Pope is executive director of Alliance Library System; Lee Logan is Consulting and Continuing Education director at ALS; Lori Bell is director of the Mid-Illinois Talking Book Center.)

The 14,000 square mile Alliance Library System was officially born on July 1, 1994. ALS came about from the merger of four regional systems in west-central Illinois: Great River Library System in Quincy, Western Illinois Library System in Galesburg, Illinois Valley Library System in Pekin, and Corn Belt Library System in Normal. The four systems were among the original 18 systems created in 1965, and had a long history of working cooperatively and sharing an LLSAP (local library system automation project): the Resource Sharing Alliance or RSA.

When the merger began, Jay Wozny was director of Corn Belt in Normal, where he had worked since 1988, succeeding original system director Henry Meisels. Sherwood Kirk was director of Western Illinois Library System in Galesburg, where he had served since 1982. Travis Tyer, the original Great River director, was still serving when merger talks began. Valerie Wilford was director at Illinois Valley, where she had taken her position in 1986, succeeding multitype library leader and system director Ray Howser. Valerie was selected as executive director of the new ALS from a field of strong candidates, and started work as the first Executive Director of Alliance on April 1, 1994. Valerie retired in December 2003, and an international search for her successor resulted in the hiring of Kitty Pope, who became Executive director on January 1, 2004.

Some of the highlights and successes of the Alliance Library System during its eleven-year history include:

- Alliance was the first library system in Illinois to offer Internet access to its members. Alliance staff trained members on how to use the Internet, established e-mail accounts and conducted workshops on how to create gophers and web pages.
- Alliance created a highly innovative network to carry data, phone, and eventually videoconferencing. The goal was to bring the original four service centers together and create one access point – one phone number where members could contact system staff located at any service center. In 2004, the phone system at Alliance was placed on the Internet, which has greatly decreased phone bills.
- Alliance received a series of Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA) grants to develop the “Hometown Countryside Connection”, which resulted in public access to the Internet in small rural libraries. More than 50 libraries participated in this project.
- In 1996-1997, 14 libraries began working on digital imaging to preserve special collections and place them on the Internet. The second digital imaging grant funded in the state resulted in “Early Illinois Women and Other Unsung Heroes: The first One Hundred Years 1818-1918”, with fascinating images, text, and other unique materials (<http://history.alliancelibrarysystem.com/IllinoisWomen/index.cfm>). The site is still heavily used and is one of the most popular websites on the Alliance web server.
- In 1998, Alliance received a \$104,000 digital imaging grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. “Illinois Alive! The Heritage and Texture of a Pivotal State During the First Century of Statehood” (<http://history.alliancelibrarysystem.com/IllinoisAlive/index.cfm>) involved 26 libraries of all types learning how to perform digital imaging; acquiring scanning equipment to do the work; and participating in a collaborative project and website.
- “Ready for Reference,” the first 24/7 collaborative academic virtual reference service in the

world, was initiated in 2001, with eight Alliance member academic libraries participating. This service was later combined with a public library project at North Suburban Library System to create My Web Librarian (<http://www.myweblibrarian.com>).

- A groundbreaking project called “Safe Harbor” was initiated in 2001-2002 with member libraries developing a manual about how to deal with problem patrons. Alliance member libraries also hosted several widely attended workshops for librarians from all over the state to discuss the topic.
- In 2001, Alliance championed a Master’s degree partnership with Dominican University. The first cohort program started in 2001 with 20 graduates. Alliance then received a federal Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) grant in 2003 for two additional classes. In total 45 Masters of Library and Information Sciences degrees were granted.
- “The Great Librarian Adventure” was launched in 2002 to promote library science as a career. Librarians of all types participated in learning activities to promote their profession, and made 100,000 contacts over an 18-month period to persons of all ages to encourage more people to become librarians.
- In 2004, Alliance consolidated three service centers (Pekin, RSA at ICC, and Bloomington) in a remodeled state of the art training center and facility on High Point Lane in East Peoria.
- In 2004, the “Libraries Matter” project (<http://www.librariesmatter.com>) was initiated to demonstrate alternative means of generating revenue. More than 70,000 bracelets were sold, and the project was featured in *American Libraries* and *Library Journal*. Funds raised through this campaign were used to enhance training for member libraries. Staff are currently working with Tumblebooks on a web-based children’s audio book entitled “Libraries Matter: A Story Long Overdue”.
- ALS developed the system’s first digital annual report in 2004. The report was written and created using flash technology with video, audio, music, and images. Alliance received compliments from the business and library communities for this exciting new format.
- In 2005, the Alliance website was redesigned, resulting in a 62 % increase in downloads with 312,484 visits. The site added interactive functions and an intuitive design that reflected the information needs of the ALS membership.
- In September 2005, ALS sold their Galesburg and Pekin facilities and continued the consolidation process by developing plans to build a new delivery hub at High Point Lane in East Peoria.

At the grand opening of the new High Point Lane building in East Peoria in May 2004, Pat Norris, Associate Director of Library Development for the Illinois State Library said, “Innovation and tradition is a powerful combination, which perfectly defines the Alliance Library System”.

Although many of the names and faces have changed in Alliance’s eleven-year history, there are still many employees who have been with ALS since its inception. New employees quickly realize that Alliance is an exciting and energizing place to work because of the system’s great tradition of bringing innovation to its operation, members, and the library community.

CHICAGO PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM

by **Alice Calabrese**

(Alice Calabrese is executive director of the Metropolitan Library System.)

Under the Library Systems Act of 1965, the Chicago Library System was established as a “consolidated” public library system, consisting of the Chicago Public Library with all its branches serving a population of more than 3 million residents.

In 1986, the Affiliates Advisory Council of CLS met to discuss conversion to a multitype library system. The Affiliates Advisory Council was established in 1976. It was designed to represent the interests of non public libraries in Chicago. There were two days of meetings that resulted in the report, “The Future of the Chicago Library System: Views of the Affiliate Members” (1986). Simultaneously, a statewide study was undertaken and HBW, Associates completed “Vision 1996: A Plan for the Illinois Library Systems in the Next Decade” (1986). The HBW report contained special recommendations for the Chicago Library System. For the next two years a conversion task force held spirited discussions, negotiated and drafted documents required for the application for conversion. At this time, the Chicago Public Library board was also the Chicago Library System board. At their board meeting in June 1989, the documents were approved and submitted to the Illinois State Library.

The implementation of conversion from a public library system to a multi type library system officially began in July, 1990. Eva R. Brown, director of Multi Type Library System Development, Chicago Library System and an employee of the Chicago Public Library, is to be commended for her work throughout her career as championing multi type cooperation in the city of Chicago (see Eva’s article earlier in this issue).

July 1, 1991 is the official birth of the Chicago Library System. Dr. John B. Duff was appointed as Acting Executive Director, and the search for a permanent director began. This search resulted in my appointment effective September 1, 1991. Six primary areas of service were emphasized as a response to the new statewide system standards: Bibliographic Access, Interlibrary Loan, Delivery, Reference, Continuing Education and Communications.

1992 saw an increase in continuing education offerings. A major focus was placed on a multi type leadership initiative. Thirty participants were selected for the “Leadership Challenge Seminar”, a three-day event bringing together members of all types. A first for librarians in the city of Chicago, this event was made possible through an LSCA Title III grant.

Organizational initiatives in 1993 included: procedures manuals for accounting, membership procedures, and membership survey on services. The survey was conducted to help the board in its strategic long range planning. When the CLS board was faced with the 1993 statewide budget cut, a decision was made to cut the Reference contract and that resulted in a cutback of hours of operation for the Harold Washington Library Center.

1994 was a very exciting year. CLS established the Dynix automation center (the LLSAP) with the help of an LSCA Title III grant; established an Internet training program (providing training for 500 individuals the first year); and established the CLS Reference Hotline, a highly successful initiative.

In 1995, administrative offices were moved from the Harold Washington Library Center to 224 S. Michigan Avenue; two local area networks were established; and the CLS training room was created. Internet training continued with 1,000 librarians participating. The *FirstSearch* test with CLS members saw 350,000 searches conducted and the contract extended to the rest of the state. CLS was the first

multi type consortium to test *FirstSearch*. ALLY grants were received for computers to be placed in public library branches and public school libraries. In most cases, these were the first computers made available to these members.

With the increase in services, two full-time consultants were hired in 1996: a membership services liaison/automation technology, and membership services liaison/training specialist. A full on-site continuing education program was established and a satellite downlink was installed. A partnership with Chicago Public Schools created:

- The first full-day in-service day for school librarians with 500 in attendance
- Re-establishment of the bureau of Libraries
- Involvement with the search for the new Director of Libraries
- Worked with school officials in the creation of a strategic plan for school libraries

Following up on the success of the first in-service day for school librarians held in 1996, a Technology Fair was held in 1997. 500 participants took part. CLS in cooperation with SLA/Illinois staffed *Info/96 - Reference Hotline* for the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. This effort gave great visibility to special librarians in the Chicago area. Work on the growth of the LLSAP continued. Ten new members were added. Additional consulting services were made available to include technology support for members in areas such as retrospective conversion, automating a collection, and software support.

Due to an increased demand in continuing education and consulting support, we doubled the space of our office in 1998 to include an additional computer lab, distance learning space, and a general training room space. Staff grew from six to nine full-time employees. The creation of the first online tutorial for Windows 95 was created to deliver the first training to our members to the desktop. The CLS Board investigated a campaign to raise millions for school library book collections. This campaign caught the attention of Congressman Rod Blagojevich, and led to *Rod's Run for Reading*.

Growth of the LLSAP continued in 1999 with ten new libraries automating their collections. Online educational opportunities were offered through Ziff Davis University (Element K). CLS also received an LSTA grant to develop two LTA classes online. Blackhawk Community College partnered with us in this work.

Website expansion in 2000 included a *Vendor Fair* website in cooperation with NILRC and the Illinois State Library. CLS then co-sponsored the *Vendor Fair* and hosted virtual access to the event. Following up on the success, the *Vendor Showcase* was designed and integrated into the CLS web site.

The Strategic Learning Center was established in 2001 to expand individualized Continuing Education to include organizational development consulting, team learning, and symposia. The first national issues symposium was offered on the topic of "e-reference". This well-attended symposium was taped to allow for video streaming on the CLS website. The Board work on strategic planning developed the following five core strategies: Educate, Advocate, Lead, Empower and Market.

In 2002, CLS received an IMLS Leadership Grant, "Coaching 21st Century Learners for Advancement in the Library Profession." The project was renamed "Teach*Model*Coach." Twenty-eight coaches were teamed with learners for a yearlong adventure. This was the first national grant we received. It was a direct response to the core strategy of Educate, "to teach, explore, model, recruit, and mentor librarians for the future."

Discussions were held during the course of this year for the legal separation of the Chicago Public Library from the multi type CLS. The change in the law was approved in the General Assembly and was signed into law by Governor Rod Blagojevich.

On July 1, 2003, CLS become The Chicago Multi Type Library System. The Board was changed to reflect the membership: academic, special and school (a nine member board).

The Presidents of CMLS and SLS appointed a joint study group to discuss issues related to the merger. The following topics were discussed at length and reported back to the full group: governance, administration and finance, personnel benefits, facilities, membership criteria and the plan of cooperation and services. A March 2004 vote was taken by each board to merge effective July 2004.

DuPage Library System

by Shirley May Byrnes and Pamela Kramer

(Shirley May Byrnes is executive director and Pamela Kramer is director of Educational Services at the DuPage Library System.)

The DuPage Library System (DLS) was organized in June 1966 under the provisions of the 1965 Illinois Library System Act. Called the DuPage County Library System, it consisted of the public libraries of Addison, Bensenville, Glen Ellyn, Itasca, Lombard, Naperville (Nichols), Roselle, Villa Park, West Chicago, Wheaton, and Wood Dale, and was housed in the Wheaton Public Library. In 1967, Alice E. (Betty) McKinley was hired as its first director. When five Kane County libraries joined the system in 1968, the word "county" was dropped from its name.

DLS moved out of the library in 1967 and moved again in 1968 and 1969 to progressively larger spaces in Wheaton. In 1973, DLS purchased the former telephone company building at 127 South First Street in Geneva. The 1916 building was renovated, and an open house was held in November. A second renovation and an addition were completed by June 1988. The late 1990's saw a third building project that renovated meeting space and created a technology-training lab.

In the early 1970's, Illinois library systems began to admit academic, special, and school libraries as affiliate members, and by 1976, all system members had agreed to participate in a multitype interlibrary loan network known as ILLINET. By 1981, there were 100 DLS members and affiliates. In 1988, the DuPage Library System converted to a multitype library system, thus providing academic, special and school members with governance rights and seats on the Board along with public library representatives.

Through a Library Resources Enrichment Grant in 1972, DLS began collecting multimedia, including 8mm films and cassette tapes. The circulating collection of framed art prints and original art was developed, consisting of original art by local artists and art prints selected by the DLS Director and staff members. The collection circulated widely among DLS member libraries until the late 1990's.

DLS delivery service began in 1968. In 1980, the Illinois Library Delivery Service (ILDS) was organized, providing the first statewide van delivery service and enhancing the resource-sharing capabilities of DLS. In 1984, interlibrary loan service was begun at the DLS Center, and a contract with the Suburban Library System provided back-up reference to DLS members.

A Blind & Physically Handicapped Subregional Service began in FY1976, and was transferred to the Suburban Audio Video Service (SAVS) in FY1988. The service returned to DLS in 1993, and the Voices of Vision (VOV) Talking Book Center was established. The territory it serves was enlarged in July 2003 when another center was closed.

In 1979, DLS contracted with CLSI Library Management System to begin building an automated union catalog of members' holdings. Six public libraries joined the effort at that time. In 1991, MAGIC (Multitype Automation Group in Consortium) was established. In 1992, some public libraries left the DLS consortium and formed LINC (Library Integrated Network Consortium). The MAGIC database is the DuPage Library System-sponsored automation program that currently represents the holdings of ten public library sites, one academic library, seven school libraries, one special library, and the DuPage Library System professional collection. MAGIC transitioned to LIB 100+ software in 1993 when CLSI merged with GEAC. In 1997, the consortium migrated to Dynix and is currently selecting new software to migrate to in 2006.

In 1989, Betty McKinley retired, and Alice Calabrese became the second executive director of the system. Alice Calabrese moved to the Chicago Library System in 1991, and Pamela Feather became the executive director.

In July 1992, then Secretary of State/State Librarian George Ryan announced a 33 % reduction in system funding. DLS, like all of the systems, began to review its core services, and significant staff and program cuts occurred. In 1993, Live and Learn funding from the Illinois State Library relieved some of the austerity.

DLS held its first Internet workshop in 1993, and in early 1994, 35 libraries contracted with DLS for Internet access through netIllinois. In 1995, several library automation systems in the northern part of the state were interconnected through a wide area network, and dial-up access was also provided through the Live And Learn (LANDL) project. In 1997, the DLS website was created. In addition, DLS began delivering training and professional development using videoconferencing and satellite technology. DLS collaborated with College of DuPage to begin offering the Virtual LTA program using these technologies.

At the end of 2000, Pamela Feather retired, and Shirley May Byrnes became the fourth Executive Director of DLS. In 2001, DLS switched its Internet access to the Illinois Century Network (ICN) and helped many of its members make the transition as well. Because of the ICN, DLS discontinued providing dedicated Internet access to its members; however, DLS continues to provide dial-up access, email accounts, and website hosting.

In the 21st century, DLS has placed new emphasis on advocacy, continuous learning and training, consulting, communication, networking, and facilitating resource sharing in a multitype library environment. Backup reference service was discontinued in 2003, and interlibrary loan service was phased out that same year. Special collections were distributed to member libraries, and the extensive art collection was sold. The revenue from the sale of the art collection served as the foundation for a scholarship fund for library education created by the Board in 2002. The first scholarship was awarded to an MLS student in 2003.

In 2002, the DLS Board adopted a new mission statement developed by a committee representative of system members. The statement was revised in 2005, and states: "The mission of the DuPage Library System is to promote, facilitate, and develop excellence in library services."

The DuPage Library System has undergone many changes during the past 40 years – in services, in staff, in members. DLS began with eleven public libraries in two counties covering 300 square miles and serving a population of 261,568. The system now has 140 members – academic, public, school, and special libraries – with 388 buildings in parts of five counties covering 612 square miles with a population of nearly 950,000 and growing daily. In the beginning, technology was a typewriter and a telephone; audiovisual was 8 mm films and LP records. Now there are PC's, the Internet, DVDs, CDs, MP3 players and more. Though formats and delivery methods have changed, DLS still strives to serve its members so that they can provide excellent library services to their communities.

Lewis & Clark Library System

by Charm Ruhnke

(Charm Ruhnke is consultant manager at Lewis and Clark Library System.)

It is difficult writing about the successes and achievements of an organization, since most organizations tend not to dwell in the past, but focus on the future. For Lewis & Clark Library System, we tried to gather a representation of our successes and achievements, but for each one we listed, we know we forgot another.

The moments we are proudest of include Saturday delivery, the shared database with Kaskaskia Library System, the Cataloging Maintenance Center (CMC), the Law Library for area law enforcement agencies, Intra- and inter-system reciprocal borrowing, CLeO (Continuous Learning Opportunities), multitype membership, patron-initiated requests with the GateNet LLSAP, state-wide delivery created by the Systems and ILDS, establishment of 17 public libraries, and creating summer school for school librarians.

Interestingly, the common factor of these achievements is their broad impact on all the members and their provision of library service to their own communities, whether school, academic, special or public. Saturday delivery has made it possible to move material fast, getting items to patrons quicker, causing them to request more things. The Law Library helped educate and support the various law enforcement agencies in Sorento, Edwardsville, Breese and the greater Metro-East area. Reciprocal borrowing? Enough said. CLeO was developed in-house to schedule and track CE activities, but was quickly shared with other Systems, the Illinois State Library, libraries in other states, as far away as Hong Kong.

Lewis & Clark Library System became multitype in 1985-86. For more than 20 years multitype membership has been a given at the regional library systems, having become so ingrained in the System psyche that trying to explain what life was like before multi-type membership to some one under 30 is like explaining how to change a wheel on a covered wagon.

One of the main purposes of the regional Illinois Library Systems is to help bring public library service to unserved areas. This is a slow task; even major library supporters are reluctant to tax themselves for library service. But the establishment of 17 public libraries and districts since 1965 represents an immense amount of cooperative work between the System staff and local citizens to bring service to more than 76,000 Illinois residents within the Lewis & Clark Library System area. Some of these establishments were supported by demonstration grants, such as Grand Prairie of the West PLD and Tri-Township PLD. Others were totally created by local efforts, such as Brighton Public and Doyle PLD. But all are part of the statewide success story of bring library service to the unserved.

During the past forty years the original 18 regional library systems have consolidated into 9. Many might not consider this an achievement, but the mergers have sharpened each System's focus on the needs and wants of their individual membership. For Lewis & Clark, our merger with a portion of the Kaskaskia Library System helped to determine our focus on training and continuing education, for insuring regular delivery to support the LLSAP's interlibrary loan activity, and on providing cross-trained consultants.

In preparing for the Systems' 40th anniversary I reread a large portion of our board minutes. I was fascinated that Lewis & Clark had a board and building space before the first employee was hired. That advocacy has always been an issue for libraries, as has technology. I also read about some of our smaller successes, such as the 100,000th item added to the collection, the 2 millionth item added to the LLSAP, the baseball games with Kaskaskia Library System staff, and the retirement parties. The past 40 years are years of which to be proud. Our next 40 years will be just as exciting.

Lincoln Trail Libraries System

by Jan Ison

(Jan Ison is executive director of Lincoln Trail Libraries System.)

Lincoln Trail Libraries System (LTLS) has had a productive history of cooperation and collaboration between and among the libraries of East Central Illinois. This productive past is due to the support and dedication of the board, personnel in member libraries, the system staff and the support for libraries by the citizens. These constants have allowed the system to be shaped and reshaped over the years. This reshaping has had the benefit of helping libraries more effectively deliver cooperative library service to the citizens. The impetus for the cooperative services would not exist if our constituents did not need resources from a variety of libraries, and need more resources than any one agency could provide.

While the programs of the system have been reshaped, many of the service outcomes are the same. In 1967, shortly after LTLS was founded, the board approved the development of a “union catalog.” While that paper and microfilm catalog is now obsolete, the need for accurate information about who owns the materials in libraries is a constant. Today, that information is provided by an online catalog of holdings with the status of availability in 96 libraries. It is anticipated that the future will bring changes to the means of providing this information, but the need for it will continue.

Another constant in services is resource sharing – Interlibrary Loan, Reciprocal Borrowing and Delivery. These services have been reshaped but the need for them is continuing and growing. In the early days, LTLS staff performed interlibrary loan for the libraries. Today, patrons are doing their own interlibrary loan requests by using technology and having needed materials delivered to the library of their choice. Reciprocal borrowing is one of the few services that have remained largely the same since the beginning of the system. The service continues to be limited to public libraries; however, there is a growing need for this service to go beyond public libraries to all types of libraries, and a growing need to formally make the service part of a “statewide” library card.

Another leg on the resource-sharing stool is delivery. It has been long anticipated that the need for physical delivery of items would disappear. The reasons are varied, from the expectation that the printed book would become obsolete to the expectation that technology would allow physical items to use a “transporter” to “materialize” them from one location to another, in the approach of *Star Trek*. Neither expectation has been realized but the demand for quick delivery of materials has dramatically increased and the number of items delivered also continues to increase. Our customers need the materials and don’t really care where they come from, just that they get them quickly. These services will also see changes in the future, most likely in the actual delivery location – from the library that owns the material to the home of the customer.

Consulting services continue as a mainstay of LTLS cooperative services. The method of service delivery has been expanded rather than totally changed as in other services. For example, consulting assistance is now provided face-to-face, by telephone or email. In the near future that will expand to utilization of instant messaging, communities of practice and other collaborative tools to share expertise. The delivery method is unimportant but the need for such services is constant, as the pressure on staff members in libraries to keep up on the latest trends in library service delivery accelerates. Education too has gone through some transformation of service delivery methods, expanding from only face-to-face to electronic online training programs, online conferencing tools and web-based conferences. One challenge that exists now that did not forty years ago is the time pressure. There simply is not enough time for library staff to take advantage of all relevant education and training opportunities.

Another piece of the consulting services that LTLS has provided focuses on helping libraries establish new service opportunities. For example, there is an influx of culturally and linguistically diverse

populations in the LTLS area. LTLS works with libraries to identify the needs of this population and seeks funds to help libraries establish programs for the local population. This type of consulting assistance is essential in order for library staff to become experienced in offering new services.

This decade-by-decade review provides a more complete picture of the events that have shaped and reshaped Lincoln Trail Libraries System:

Decade 1: 1965 - 1975

January 11, 1966 — The first organizational meeting of System XVI was held with the stated purpose “to establish a system of autonomous libraries to cooperate in providing continually improving service to the people of the area.”

March 1, 1966 — Lincoln Trail Libraries System was approved by Secretary of State Paul Powell with 17 public library members: Arthur, Champaign, Chrisman, Danville, Fairmount, Gilman, Hoopeston, Martinsville, Milford, Newman, Onarga, Paris, Paxton, Philo, Tuscola, Villa Grove, and Urbana. On April 18, 1966, the official name was adopted: Lincoln Trail Libraries. (Note that this is the only system that used “libraries” instead of “library.”)

August 1966 — Robert Carter began as the first Executive Director.

October 1966 — The Board approved the development of a Union Catalog using the holdings of Champaign, Danville and Urbana. The card catalogs of those libraries were microfilmed and cards interfiled at the headquarters.

February 1967 — Lincoln Trail members began offering Reciprocal Borrowing as a service and this has been a constant for public libraries since the beginning. Regular vehicular delivery also began in February 1967 to all members once a week and twice a week to Champaign, Danville and Urbana.

August 1967 — Interlibrary loan began in August. Other services were also in early stages including Consulting (termed Advisory Service), developing a centralized Audio-Visual Collection and the beginning of the Publicity and Public Information service.

December 1969 — The system moved into a new facility at 1704 West Interstate Drive, Champaign, Illinois. The building contained 10,800 square feet and was designed to last twenty years. It was a modular design so that it could be easily expanded. Almost 40 years later, LTLS is still housed in the same facility with the same square footage.

February 1970 — Anthony Baldarotta became the second Executive Director for LTLS.

1973 — The University of Illinois affiliated with LTLS as the first academic library in the system.

Decade 2: 1975 - 1985

FY 1975 — Blind and Physically Handicapped Service was established in cooperation with Corn Belt Library System, the first of many intersystem cooperative projects.

FY 1976 — Burnham City Hospital, Carle Hospital, Mercy Hospital, and Sarah Bush Lincoln Hospital affiliated with LTLS as the first special library affiliates.

August 1977 — Elaine Albright became the third Executive Director of Lincoln Trail.

March 1978 — The LTLS Board of Directors voted to automate the circulation of the collection that was owned by Lincoln Trail Libraries System using a “full” bibliographic record. No automation vendor supported MARC records at that time.

August 1978 — LTLS opened an office at the University of Illinois for providing centralized interlibrary loan borrowing for the faculty and students of the university. This contract arrangement was in effect until 1994.

1978 — LTLS received an LSTA Grant to automate 8 libraries with shared circulation — Allerton Public Library (Monticello), Champaign Public Library, Danville Public Library, Lake Land Community College Library, Mahomet Public Library, Philo Public Library, and the Rantoul Public Library. This was the first of 4 federal grants that allowed for building shared integrated library service system. LTLS was the first library system to have a non-public library as a member of the automation program.

1980 — LTLS established a shared telecommunications management program as part of the shared circulation program for a Wide Area Network and used a state administered telecommunication system, TELPAK, to get the least expensive communication rates.

DeLand-Weldon Community Unit School District affiliated with LTLS as the first school district affiliate.

October 1983 — Jan Ison became the system’s fourth Executive Director.

December 1984 — LTLS public library members voted overwhelmingly to convert to a multitype library system – 46 yes, 1 no. The libraries voting for conversion represented 99.3 % of the system population served by public libraries.

Decade 3: 1985 - 1995

July 1985 — LTLS began operating with its first multitype Board of Directors; 102 libraries were incorporated into the multitype library system: 5 Academic, 47 Public, 26 School District, and 24 Special libraries.

December 1990 — Cissna Park was selected to demonstrate library service as a combined school/public library. This demonstration led to the establishment of library service in April 1991. Cissna Park continues to operate as a combined library.

June 1991 — LTLS celebrated its 25th anniversary. There were 106 members: 6 Academic, 48 Public, 32 School District, and 20 Special library members.

October 1991 — Lincoln Trail Libraries System received an LSTA Grant to convert the shared automation system to MARC. The participants in the shared system voted to utilize OCLC as the sole source for MARC bibliographic records and established criteria for libraries that were eligible to enter new records into the shared database. LTLS became the first system to mandate a source for MARC records.

November 1991 — LTLS began hosting international visitors from the University of Illinois Mortenson Center for International Librarianship to discuss library cooperation as it operates in Illinois. Over the years, LTLS has hosted more than 650 librarians from 86 countries.

July 1992 — Lincoln Trail Libraries System established a Cataloging Center as a cooperative shared cost program for libraries that could not meet the criteria to enter MARC bibliographic records into the shared catalog.

November 1993 — New software for the shared automation system and a new name LINC (Libraries IN Cooperation) was implemented. As part of the migration, libraries offered patron-initiated interlibrary loan service. This was the first multitype consortium in Illinois to have libraries of all types participating in self-service for their customers. At the same time, libraries began to offer a public access catalog to patrons.

1993 — An LTLS Affiliate Agency Policy was adopted by the Board. It defined special cooperative relationships between LTLS and its members and a broad range of information, community, and government agencies and organizations. In 1994 LTLS approved its first non-library members: WEIU radio/television, Charleston; Illinois Heritage Association, Urbana; and Illinois Cooperative Extension Service, Urbana.

June 1994 — LTLS received its first Live and Learn Automation Grant that added 5 libraries as members of LINC. This was the first of 9 grants that expanded the LINC database from 23 to 91 members during the time of the grant's existence.

October 1994 — LTLS began to offer FirstSearch access to the users of the LINC system directly from the LINC catalog, becoming the first system to allow such a broad public access.

October 1994 — LTLS received an LSTA grant to demonstrate library service to residents in 16 libraries. This represented 45,000 plus residents who were able to get library service during the time of the demonstration.

April 1995 — Dial Access for the public was made available. To enhance this service, LTLS and members installed local phone lines in key locations in the service area so that many citizens could have local telephone access to the database.

LTLS approved the first Membership Policy that included a comprehensive approach to membership and allowed for Full and Developmental members. In 2005 that policy was revised to include requiring participation in OCLC in order for libraries to provide access to local holdings to broaden resource sharing.

Decade 4: 1995 - 2005

December 1996 — LTLS prepared 4 reports for the Illinois State Library from Regional Planning Panels that studied and made recommendations on strategies for achieving universal public library service for all residents of LTLS.

February 1997 — LTnet began as a service to provide access to Internet services, access to library-related information sources, and access to LINC and Email for staff of member libraries.

April 1998 — Lincoln Trail Libraries System applied for and received the first funding for E-Rate telecommunications discounts on behalf of member libraries.

LTLS began using videoconferencing equipment as part of the Continuing Education and Training Program and as a means to participate in meetings rather than traveling to other sites.

March 1998 — The LTLS web page, <http://www.ltls.org>, was introduced to the public. This has become the primary method of supporting open information about LTLS to the public.

August 1999 — PAC For Windows, a graphical public access catalog for LINC, was installed in libraries that are members of LINC. At approximately the same time, a web based PAC was made available to the public through the LTLS web site.

September 1999 — MARC authority records were loaded into LINC providing a uniform subject and name convention for accessing the author and subject access to the catalog for the patrons.

June 2000 — The telecommunications network for the LINC system was revised as a result of legislation creating the Illinois Century Network, a telecommunications backbone providing high-speed access to data, video, and audio communication. Lincoln Trail no longer supported a Wide Area Network for telecommunications, but worked with ICN to help libraries participate as part of a larger network.

September 2000 — Lincoln Trail was selected as one of 2 Cataloging Maintenance Centers (there are now 3 centers) for the state of Illinois. The center provided copy and original cataloging for library systems whose bibliographic records could not be loaded into OCLC.

July 2003 — LTLS introduced CLaSS, Continuous Learning Subscription Service, which allowed libraries to subscribe to all the educational offerings of LTLS at one time and send as many staff members as desired for these offerings.

April 2004 — Another major upgrade and migration for LINC became operational. The libraries moved from a text-based to a graphical product. For the public, all of the catalogs looked the same whether they were in the library or at a remote location. In addition, a Kids' version of the catalog became available for users.

April 2004 — My Librarian, a cooperative virtual reference program, began with 18 multitype libraries to answer reference questions submitted by the public via email or an online chat service.

October 2004 — Lincoln Trail received an LSTA Grant to help libraries adapt to the changing demographics of the service population. The grant, entitled "Diversity and Cultural Competency in Rural Libraries," was the most recent of many grants that helped libraries demonstrate special services. Other similar grants provided materials for children who were abused, assisted caregivers of elderly, and worked with libraries in literacy efforts.

September 2005 — Lincoln Trail Libraries System, in cooperation with the North Suburban Library System, began My Media Mall, a shared program allowing LTLS customers of all LINC libraries to download ebooks and audio books.

October 2005 — Lincoln Trail membership was 7 Academic, 53 Public, 17 Special, and 45 School District libraries. The membership by building was 64 Academic, 54 Public, 17 Special, and 148 School District libraries. The participation in LINC by building was 2 Academic, 35 Public, 3 Special, and 51 School District libraries.

Metropolitan/Suburban Library Systems

by Alice Calabrese

(Alice Calabrese is executive director of Metropolitan Library System.)

Metropolitan Library System was created in 2004 from the merger of the Chicago Multitype Library System and Suburban Library System. The years 1967-1989 of SLS' history have been documented in Illinois Libraries, March 1990. This report continues the same format of reporting historical SLS milestones from 1989 until SLS went out of existence in 2004. The report then covers the first year of MLS.

In 1989-90, elementary school district memberships launched a year of unheralded growth: 15 new members with 85 libraries in one fiscal year. As of June 30, 1990, total SLS membership was composed of 180 members with 267 libraries. SLS and North Suburban Library System adopted a new contract for the Suburban Audio Visual Service. A new long-range plan for SLS was prepared and approved with extensive member involvement. Membership criteria for public libraries began a development process. Special library membership requirements became effective at the end of 1989. A series of major capital improvement projects was started: new roof, fire suppression sprinkler system, driveway/parking lot repair and improvement, recarpeting of the building and new office furnishings. A major study of SLS delivery service was undertaken with a determination to offer delivery service a minimum of twice per week, effective January 1, 1991. A new automated booking system for Suburban Audio Visual Service was purchased. Project SLICD (Statewide Library Information for Caregivers of the Disabled) was closed as of June 30, 1991. A position of Deputy Director of SLS was created.

The Illinois White House Conference leading up to the formal White House Conference in July 1991 had significant impact on proposed new priorities and strategies for libraries in the next decade. SLS moved from housing an automated system for serving the blind and physically handicapped at the SAVS office, to using the resources of the Illinois Regional BPH automation program in Chicago. The state of Illinois' precarious fiscal condition and funding for systems resulted in a year of uncertainty and an ultimate cutback in all operations and staff size. NSLS ceased its contractual program with the Suburban Audio Visual Service (SAVS).

In 1992-93, significant reductions in State funding to library systems resulted in a reduction of 45 staff positions as SLS, out of 101 employees. Similar reductions in service to members resulted from this cutback. A new vendor contract was signed for SWAN, the System Wide Automated Network. Seeking a new host library for Reference Service presented a daunting task.

Following fifteen years of residency at the Oak Lawn Public Library, Reference Service was moved in 1993 to a new host site at the Oak Park Public Library. Contracts for back-up reference service were offered to DuPage Library System and North Suburban Library System. A massive retraining program for 75 member libraries took place relating to an upgrade of the SWAN network. Reviewing the system standards document and drafting a new long-range plan was a major task for FY94. A major salary and compensation study was adopted by the Board of Directors for implementation in the spring of 1994. An Automation Visioning Committee was conceived and appointed to address the utilization of automation technology throughout the System. A broad based automation-consulting program was undertaken with an external vendor providing the technological expertise, and SLS facilitating the process.

Internet access was a top priority of the year 1994, especially with funding from the Live and Learn Automation Grant to systems from the State Library. A redefinition of the need for more emphasis on technological aspects of service to member organizations resulted in the creation of a new SLS staff position, Information Technology Services Director. Preparation for on-site Internet training was begun

during the year. The office automation program was updated with a new file server and new PC's for system staff. The OCLC First Search program, with funding from the Illinois State Library, came to fruition, and by the end of the year, the Internet was being utilized to access OCLC's First Search. The SLS Board approved a program of grant support for trustees and staff of member libraries to attend the ALA sponsored legislative day in Washington, D.C. Position descriptions for staff were rewritten to reflect the results from the 1994 management and salary study.

A new Information Technology Services Director was hired in the Fall of FY96. Hours of reference service were expanded to satisfy membership requests. Internet training in the SLS training room became an overwhelming task, necessitating the need for adjunct training staff. Drafting policies concerning Internet usage for SLS staff and for member libraries was a major task as the Internet became more integral to the SLS operations. The announcement of Executive Director James M. O'Brien's retirement at the end of FY96 started the search process for a new Executive Director to be hired and on board by July 1, 1996. Reviewing the role of SLS in providing an audiovisual collection to member libraries came under scrutiny with the ultimate decision to phase out the program in early FY97. A two-year project to complete the manual upgrade of all pseudo MARC records on the SWAN database to full MARC was accomplished in FY96. The system staff implemented the Windows environment into their work utilizing Microsoft Office Suite. A complete revamping of the SLS Personal Policy/Employee Handbook was completed.

The new Executive Director, Louise McAulay, was hired in the July of 1996. Satellite teleconferencing became a reality during this year with the installation of a roof mounted satellite dish. More advances in technology occurred with the purchase of a Web server and the installation of a firewall for the SLS automation equipment. The new position of Internet Development Specialist was created, and a person was hired to fill that position in the spring of 1997, with the major responsibility of developing the SLS web site. A review of Reference Service started midyear with several focus group sessions. A review of vendors for the SLS LLSAP, SWAN, was begun during the year with a decision to switch from the current vendor, GEAC, to one of two potential new vendors, DRA or Innovative. SLS joined the NorthStarNet project in cooperation with the North Suburban Library System and added two SLS member libraries to the project during the year.

A web site for SLS went "live" in the fall of 1997. A V-TEL videoconferencing system was installed during the year and provided promise for distance education opportunities for SLS members. The SLS LLSAP, SWAN, successfully negotiated a five-year contract with a new vendor, Innovative Interfaces, Inc. Graphical access to the Internet became a more viable reality in 1998 for staff and members. An Internet Pricing Task Force convened during the year to establish fair pricing of Internet service for member libraries. A construction project to make the north entrance to the building handicapped accessible was completed in FY98. The first year of e-rate applications for reimbursement for phone services and telecommunication services was launched. Staff wrote a multi-year Technology Plan for SLS. The NorthStarNet project grew to include nine libraries. To make the SLS Newsletter more user-friendly for member libraries and staff, the youth services newsletter, *Take Note*, was incorporated into the SLS Newsletter, *SLS News*, to make one production. A major internal upgrade of software was completed for SLS staff with a transition to Microsoft Windows 95 and Office 97. SLS technical staff had major involvement with the statewide VIC (Virtual Illinois Catalog) project.

In 1998-99, SWAN (the SLS LLSAP) migrated from to Innovative Interfaces, Inc. after 25 years with GEAC. This was a major undertaking involving a database of 970,000 titles, 6.4 million items and 1.3 million patrons. The system staff developed a Y2K program for transition into the year 2000. A special committee called Directions Toward 2000+ developed a Long Range Plan for the System. The acquisition of new members to SLS continued with two schools and one public library as

developmental libraries and three special libraries as full members. A new phone system was installed in early FY99 with a fully automated voice mail system allowing for greater variety of use. The Reference Service moved from Oak Park Public Library to the Tinley Park Public Library. This involved moving 6 staff members and approximately 10,000 volumes. A cooperative distance education venture with College of DuPage and the Heritage Trail Library System resulted in the ability to offer the Library Technical Assistant (LTA) program to SLS member library staff. A Trustee newsletter was started in FY99.

In March of 2000 the Long Range Plan was finally completed. The LLSAP, SWAN, continued to make strides in the switch from the character based INNOPAC to the Millennium product. The electoral process of voting for Directors of the SLS System was changed this year from a personal ballot at the annual meeting to a vote by mail ballot. Focus on the future of libraries and new materials, such as e-books, created new material for workshops. The implementation of the Illinois Century Network (ICN) became a big challenge for SLS staff as well as for members. Cooperation in the form of shared programming efforts between systems (SLS and NSLS) and between Special Librarians in SLS and DuPage Library System was heavily emphasized during the year. The NorthStarNet project has grown to include 26 SLS libraries serving 34 communities.

A multi-year project of planning, designing and implementing an SLS extranet started in 2000 with the introduction of the SLS portal. The "Lighting the Fire" grant program was an innovative project initiated by the Illinois State Library in the Spring of FY01. Fifty-one LLSAP libraries were successfully migrated to ICN for Internet service. OCLC back loading began in the fall of FY01 when SWAN staff started database maintenance cleanup work. The Library Services Consultant and the Youth Services Consultant positions were filled after a long interval of vacancy in both slots. Phase out of the contract between SLS and DLS for Reference Service started in FY01. A multi-system LSTA grant called *LibraryU* was a joint effort between Shawnee, SLS, Lewis and Clark and River Bend Library Systems to provide web-based training to system staff and the public. SLS graduated the first class of ten students from the College of DuPage LTA program. A Reference Service Task Force made up and chaired by SLS members recommended that continuing education and reference advising be the focal points for the Reference Service program as SLS.

In 2001-2002, a major accomplishment was the moving of all the LLSAP libraries over to the ICN (Illinois Century Network) connection. SLS's ICN DS3 circuit was installed in early February. LLSAP staff then assisted each library in their migration from their dedicated data line to the ICN. The process took approximately six months. An SLS communication plan was completed at the end of 2002. Implementation was begun via the newly expanded communication working group. System staff members presented two sessions in regional locations to help libraries fill out applications to participate in the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation grants initiative.

SLS Membership and the Board worked to finalize a strategic plan, which was accepted by the Board at the April 21, 2003 board meeting. SLS headquarters space was remodeled to create a new space to house the SLS reference collection and staff. Some of the collection was disseminated to the membership, who agreed to keep their portion up to date. The Executive Director, Louise McAuley, retired effective August 30, 2003.

SLS faced the challenge of replacing several major positions within the organization, including the Executive Director, Director of SWAN, and Accounting Manager.

The Presidents of CMLS and SLS appointed a joint study group to discuss issues related to a merger of the two systems. The following topics were discussed at length and reported back to the full group:

governance, administration and finance, personnel benefits, facilities, membership criteria, and the plan of cooperation and services. A March 2004 vote was taken by each board to merge effective July 2004.

The Board presidents of Chicago Multitype Library System (CMLS), Melanie Ehrhart and Suburban Library System (SLS), Elliot Spiegel, appointed members to a joint Study Group to discuss the feasibility of merger and prepare documentation related to the following: governance, administration, finance, personnel, benefits, facilities and membership criteria. A historic vote was taken in March 2004 to officially prepare the legislation necessary to have a merger occur on July 1, 2004. Both boards took separate votes on the merger. The merger included all the public, academic, special and school libraries of SLS and the academic, special and schools libraries in the city of Chicago. Total membership includes 534 members in 1500 buildings.

Having served as Executive Director of CMLS and Interim Executive Director of SLS, I was named Executive Director of the Metropolitan Library System. The Burr Ridge office was selected as the official administrative address for the newly merged system. The Chicago office was to remain, continuing to provide continuing education for members, and to provide support and consulting to academic and special librarians.

The makeup of the board for the new system was agreed upon in talks prior to the merger. Fifteen members were to be elected to represent the membership. There were eight public library trustees, two academic, two special and two school board members to be elected. One public library director was also added. Ex-officio members would include the co-chair of MLS Advisory and the co-chair of SWAN Advisory.

The strengths of the new system included services offered by both. SWAN (System Wide Area Network, a cooperative of seventy-eight libraries) would continue and discussion began on growing the membership. The Strategic Learning Center continued to offer individualized continuing education classes, team-learning opportunities for the members onsite or off site, and technology summits and training would continue. Consulting services to librarians, SLS delivery, advocacy initiatives continued without any interruption of service.

Strategic planning for the new system is planned for fiscal year 2006.

North Suburban Library System

by Judy Hoffman

(Judy Hoffman is Marketing/Communications specialist at North Suburban Library System.)

Whether we speak of family traditions or marketplace trends, the word “change” is guaranteed to enter the discussion at some point. Change is natural and necessary, exhilarating and exhausting, and a key component in the 40-year evolution of Illinois Regional Library Systems.

The North Suburban Library System (NSLS) has embraced change through the tenures of its two directors: Robert McClarren, who served from the start of NSLS until he handed over the reigns to Sarah Ann Long in 1989. Over the decades, both system directors and boards continually re-examined what was needed by the member libraries, and like spring cleaning rounds, made changes as a result.

In addition to the ever-present funding challenges, what influenced the direction of NSLS? Like our sister Systems, NSLS has a chronology of projects that stretches on and on. Looking over the files and lists, what jumped out were the trends, and how they continued. Following, in no particular order, are the 40th anniversary pick for the NSLS Top Ten Trends:

- 1. Serving the Unserved.** NSLS’s growth was spurred by the success of Project PLUS grants in the 1970s from the Illinois State Library, funded by federal Library Service and Construction Act monies. The lack of library service in the expanding suburbs was glaring to the new residents moving here from Chicago and other metropolitan areas. We were ripe for PLUS, and a total of nine PLUS grants resulted in the creation of three new district libraries and three annexations to existing libraries. The impact reverberates today as the population in these areas has grown exponentially.
- 2. Resource Sharing.** NSLS activities in 1968-70 focused on the expansion of library collections and services. One service that still remains from that era is the Reciprocal Borrowing Program (RBP). Member libraries were hesitant at first to take on RBP, but in FY 2004, NSLS RBP totaled over 2.8 million items. Other services that emerged and were eventually retired were the Central Serials Service, the System Reference Service, and the System Audio-Visual Service with the Suburban Library System (now the Metropolitan Library System).

In 1995, libraries in NSLS and the Suburban Library System (SLS) launched an online community information network, NorthStarNet, which is celebrating its 10th anniversary. NSLS’s local history digitization project, Digital Past, went live in 1998, and currently holds 38,000 records. In 2005, NSLS founded the digital book consortium, MyMediaMall. Resource sharing is also vibrantly supported by members that meet face-to-face in 40 different NSLS networking groups, via e-mail lists and online forums known as Communities of Practice.

- 3. Automation** – In 1974, NSLS financed a cooperative circulation system formed by six member libraries. The first of its kind in the country, and now serving 20+ libraries, Cooperative Computer Services (CCS) is an independent nonprofit. NSLS’s first union catalog for all member library types, LIAison, was distributed on CD-Rom, transitioned fully online and then was retired in 2004. NSLS members are now utilizing OCLC WorldCat for interlibrary loan.
- 4. Special Projects:** Partnerships have brought expertise and funding that keep libraries and systems a vital resource to the communities we serve. The diverse educational and cultural opportunities have included multiple National Endowment for the Humanities grants; Human Genome education from the U.S. Department of Energy, and the Karen Keshet Foundation’s effort to promote Jewish literature through the Nextbook initiative.

5. **Advocacy** – Legislators tell us that the best way to have our message heard is to present it in person. NSLS gave members a powerful tool to make that happen with the first annual Legislative Breakfast in 1990. NSLS encourages members to maintain a year round presence with local visits, and by providing training, scholarships for travel to Washington for National Advocacy Day, and cooperative state efforts.
6. **Image Building** – At first Systems were to be invisible to the general public, and this included unmarked white delivery vans. But when Systems went to the State legislature to get more funding, the response basically was “Who are you?” NSLS had its first logo created in 1989, and began a strong commitment to marketing and public relations for the System and members. This includes ongoing marketing workshops for members, the launch of *What’s New in Libraries?*, a monthly cable television program seen in 75 communities, a weekly column in the state’s third largest newspaper, and receiving five John Cotton Dana Library Public Relations Awards.
7. **Honoring Our Own** – NSLS instituted the annual Membership Awards in 1993, giving long overdue recognition for the collaborative and innovative efforts of library staff, trustees, volunteers and advocates. Nominations come from the members, and the winners are recognized at the popular annual Banquet. In 2006, selected award categories will carry corporate sponsor cash prizes.
8. **Reengineering the Workforce** – In 1995 NSLS staff began its transition to a Learning Organization. The goal has been to create a strong mission of service to our member libraries and recruit the best people to implement it. With such tight funding, we could not afford the luxury of one-person leadership. Every staffer has to be fully engaged, understand the mission and be able and implement it. NSLS invests in staff by focusing on strengths, talents, and personal goals and finding ways to smooth the way along the work life journey.
9. **E-Organization** – October 1992 message to NSLS members: “The Bulletin Board (aka Blue Sheets) is going high tech!...the Bulletin will be faxed to all member libraries that have fax machines. This change will mean that all fax-equipped members will receive the Bulletin at the same time. Members not having fax machines are encouraged to get them.” Just 18 months later, information sharing began a new direction when NSLS established its Internet node in April 1994. Soon came the System Web site; online registration for class and events, and publishing the System annual report and weekly newsletter and announcements solely in electronic format. Our electronic capability has redefined what we do and how we did it, how we communicate and how we relate to each other.
10. **Building a Better Board:** NSLS went multitype in 1989, one of the last Systems to do so. What followed was a long period grappling with the creation of a more “diverse” board to match the makeup of the members. The push came most strongly from the academic library members with a desire to be part of System governance. A new board structure was adopted, seating 12 public library trustees and one representative each from academic, school and special libraries. But the members and board recognized that better leadership would come with even more diversity. Today the NSLS board consists of nine public library trustees, one public library staff member, and three representatives from academic, school, and special libraries. The remaining three members are elected at large from any of the four types of member libraries.

We know how change plays, and no doubt, this list will have a fresh face as Illinois Systems write the next history when we celebrate our 50th anniversary.

Prairie Area Library System

By Robert W. McKay

(Robert McKay is executive director of Prairie Area Library System.)

The area now known as the Prairie Area Library System (PALS) was served by four library systems in the late 1960s: the Bur Oak Library System (BOLS), the Northern Illinois Library System (NILS), the River Bend Library System (RBLs) and the Starved Rock Library System (SRLS). The Bur Oak and Starved Rock Library Systems merged in 1993 to become the Heritage Trail Library System. The Heritage Trail Library System, the Northern Illinois Library System and the River Bend Library System merged in 2004 to become the Prairie Area Library System. Originally, there were 83 public library members in the four original systems; today there are 370 members of PALS: 138 public libraries, 22 academic libraries, 33 special libraries and 177 school libraries.

Cooperation and resource sharing has been the cornerstone of system programs for forty years. Interlibrary loan, reciprocal borrowing and delivery programs were started by these four systems immediately after being founded. As computer technology evolved, member libraries came together and expanded how they shared services and resources. The HAL consortium was formed in 1978, the Quad-LINC consortium in 1980, the NIC consortium in 1984, and the NILScatT consortium in 1994. Today there are 86 online members and 122 union list members that participate in the PALS consortia, or 56% of member libraries. These libraries plan to merge into one consortium in 2006. It is hoped that even more members will be able to join the new consortium as either online or union list members. Libraries across PALS can request interlibrary loans from any of the current four shared catalogs. The original four systems combined delivered fewer than 50,000 items annually between members in the late '60s; in FY2005, PALS drivers delivered 1,015,830 items, evidence of the extremely high level of resource sharing between all types of PALS libraries.

PALS member libraries have valued multi-type cooperation since systems began. Numerous projects over the years have encouraged libraries of all types to share services for their mutual benefit. A Quad-City Union List of Periodicals, including the holdings of all sizes and types of libraries, has existed since the 1960s. The NILS film co-operative served all kinds of libraries in northern Illinois from the 1960s to the 1980s. Many cooperative programs that exist today have their foundation in earlier successful collaborations that have evolved to meet the needs of today's library users. Examples of this are the Librarian Live! virtual reference service, the PALS ELibrary Consortium, shared database subscriptions, and the four PALS library consortia. A number of PALS special interest groups exist today that allow member libraries of all types and sizes to network and share expertise.

System staff has worked hard for forty years to assist members in providing excellent library services to their communities. Consulting, communication and continuing education have been core services that have helped librarians keep up with new trends and meet their patrons' evolving needs. But as library service has become more complex over the years, system staff is constantly challenged to improve the standard for consulting and continuing education. In the late 60s, the four original systems each provided an average of 20 training events per year; in FY2005, PALS provided 444 continuous learning events and answered 1848 consulting requests.

System staff has also assisted member libraries in expanding library service to unserved citizens since the mid '60s. In the mid '60s, 32% of downstate Illinois (excluding Chicago) was untaxed for public library service. Because of special grant funds provided by the Illinois State Library, and the hard work of member library staff with assistance from system staff, that percentage has decreased significantly since then. In 2005, 12% of PALS citizens are untaxed for library service.

The staff of the new Prairie Area Library System has worked conscientiously to build the new system's services based on the strengths of the former systems in their forty years of service. One of these strengths is a number of long-term employees whose experience and knowledge make them valuable assets to the organization. The PALS staff is a strong meld of experienced and newer employees that bring fresh ideas and enthusiasm to the system. PALS staff is proud of their predecessor system's accomplishments, and looks forward to the challenges that the future holds for Illinois library systems and their members.

Rolling Prairie Library System

by Beverly Obert

(Beverly Obert became executive director of Rolling Prairie Library System in 2005.)

In our 40th year, Rolling Prairie Library System can look back with pride and say that providing quality services to our members has always been our first priority. The variety of services offered has changed over time, but not the philosophy of providing the information, training, and consulting that our members require to serve their individual communities.

RPLS was incorporated in October 1965. The first members of RPLS were Decatur Public Library, Friends Creek Township Library in Argenta, Illiopolis Public Library, Marrowbone Township Library in Bethany, and the Vespasian Warner Public Library in Clinton. These charter members remain with RPLS member libraries to this day. Membership grew quickly, and by the end of 1966 there were 18 members. Today the System has 127 members, 9 academic, 46 public, 48 school districts and 24 special libraries. This translates into 264 individual library facilities.

The first System Director was Elizabeth Edwards, who joined the System in February 1966. Under her leadership, the Rolling Prairie Libraries became firmly established. The headquarters of the System was originally at the Decatur Public Library. However, the System Board purchased the old Eisner food store, located at the corner of Eldorado and Edward Streets, as its headquarters in March 1966. The building has undergone two major remodeling projects and several smaller ones through the years to accommodate changes in services and member training needs.

Early services of the System included bookmobile service, a rotating collection of print materials and framed art prints, central book ordering and processing /cataloging departments, an 8mm and 16mm film collection, interlibrary loan, Books by Mail, continuing education and training, reference, and the Talking Books program. Over time, these services have changed. There is no longer bookmobile service, no rotating collection of materials, and no ordering or processing service. The film and video collection is gone, and the Talking Books program has moved to East Peoria. Why the changes? The libraries' needs changed as they developed tax-supported libraries, became more self-sufficient, and attended workshops to learn about collection development, cataloging, and reference services. Currently the System offers consulting services, a wide range of continuing education and training programs, the LLSAP (Local Library System Automation Project), training in online interlibrary loan, and delivery.

The LLSAP is a major part of Rolling Prairie. Begun in 1977 with the collections of Rolling Prairie and the Decatur Public Library, the project has grown to contain more than 850,000 bibliographic records and 2,700,000 item records from 143 member libraries. Advances in library automation systems have resulted in several migrations from one product to another. The most recent was the April 2004, migration to Dynix Horizon.

The most significant change to affect RPLS in 40 years was the change to a multitype library system. Before this change, only public libraries were members and had the opportunity to sit on the board of directors. Gradually services were extended to school, academic, and special libraries. However, they had no say in the governance of the System. The transition to a multitype system began in 1980 and took more than 5 years. In October 1985, the first multitype board was seated at RPLS.

Forty years of service and only four directors! Following Elizabeth Edwards, Ray Ewick became director in 1972. Robert Plotzke followed Ray in October 1978. On July 1, 2005 I was honored to be named Executive Director.

What does the future hold? We have no crystal ball, but as the needs of RPLS member libraries change, so will the services that are offered. Changing needs means changing services. Forty years of service is just the beginning!

Shawnee Library System

by Joe Harris

(Joe Harris is executive director of Shawnee Library System.)

Until the Shawnee name was selected in April 1966, the southern most library system was known simply as “system 21”. Since that time a combination of challenges, initiative, leadership, and a tremendous amount of dedication and hard work have contributed to forty years of progress for member libraries. Shawnee has grown from a small rural system serving 21 public libraries and 17 counties to one serving all or parts of 32 counties and 12,719 square miles with 230 libraries of all types. Comprised of 78 public libraries, 118 school districts, 14 academic and 20 special libraries, this diverse membership brings a rich and full body of experience from which all members benefit. The present Shawnee Library System has progressed through the transition to a multi-type system; mergers; changes in library automation; budget challenges; and much more to become the dynamic organization it is today.

While change has been a constant throughout the forty years of library systems, there were some true turning points that must be noted. The first was the transition from a public library system to a true multitype library system. This inclusion of school libraries, academic libraries, and special libraries brought renewed strength and resources to all members. The second was the merger of the old Shawnee Library System with Cumberland Trail Library System in 1991. This was followed by the dissolution of Kaskaskia Library System, with a group of those libraries joining the newly expanded and reorganized Shawnee Library System. The third key event was the new library automation system that was implemented to serve the needs of the members of the expanded Shawnee Library System. This laid the foundation for the enhanced resource sharing and the database of over two million items that now serves Shawnee members.

While the certificate authorizing Shawnee Library System is dated August 17, 1965, the library system actually started with an organizational meeting in January of 1966 recognizing 26 public libraries as members. James A. Ubel was hired as the first system executive director and served in that position until his retirement in the fall of 2001. Jeanette Halldorson was the second employee of the System and retired from the position of assistant director in the fall of 2001. Although Little Egypt was considered as a possible name for System 21, it was officially named Shawnee in April 1966.

The first System offices were in Morris Library at Southern Illinois University, Carbondale. In 1967, the System moved to a former monument company building in Marion, until a fire destroyed the building in September of that year. Offices were then established at a former Herrin, Illinois bank building until the current facility was completed in November of 1968.

Also in 1968, the Southern Illinois Talking Book Center was established. The SITBC expanded in 1990 and then again in 2003 to serve an area larger than the present Shawnee Library System. SITBC continues to operate from the Shawnee Headquarters building.

Much of the early effort focused on the development of library service to those persons unserved by public libraries. At the time SLS was formed, more than 50 per cent of the population of Shawnee lived in areas without public library service. Reading centers were established as a means of demonstrating library service, with the goal of creating tax-supported libraries. Effort is now focused on supporting existing libraries to expand their service areas. As a result, the population not served by public libraries is approximately 35 per cent. Recent years have seen renewed voter support as library district creation and expansion has met with success.

Academic libraries joined the system as affiliate members in 1973, followed by special libraries in 1974, and school libraries in 1976. This resulted in the System Board adopting a multitype governance structure in 1989.

The System's greatest changes came in 1992-1993. In 1992, Shawnee merged with the Cumberland Trail Library System. The Kaskaskia Library System dissolved in 1993 and those libraries divided their new memberships between the Lewis and Clark Library System and Shawnee. Despite facing a significant budget cut in the summer of 1992, the new system configuration allowed for progress to continue.

This new and expanded Shawnee Library System led to changes impacting governance, services, and particularly a new library automation system. Shawnee, Cumberland Trail, and Kaskaskia library systems all had automation systems implemented in 1979 and 1980. The merger resulted in the implementation of a new and more capable automation system that now serves 72 member libraries with more than 2 million items. Plans have been made and a contract signed to move the Shawnee LLSAP now known as the Southern Illinois Library Network (SILNET) to a next generation automation system and to expand it to serve additional libraries.

Another benchmark of system progress has been the expansion of high speed Internet access in the libraries of southern Illinois. While Internet access at the system headquarters began in 1994, access was not achieved on a widespread basis for member public libraries until the advent of the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation grant program in 2000. Academic libraries and school libraries also struggled at first to provide Internet access for students and faculty but it soon became essential to their educational programs.

The period following the merger and installation of the new library automation system witnessed further change, with retirement of key system staff, most notably director Ubel. Walter Burkhalter was selected as the next executive director, and brought with him system experience gained in Wisconsin. He helped to implement a planning process that included extensive member involvement. This led to a new mission statement that committed Shawnee to a renewed emphasis on advocacy for all member libraries.

In 2002 Mr. Burkhalter returned to Wisconsin to accept a position as a library system director. I was serving as information services consultant and was appointed by the Board as interim director. Following a search and selection process I was named executive director in 2003.

Change has continued at Shawnee, with reorganization of delivery routes, revision of system membership criteria, implementation of online registration for continuing education, and increased reliance on electronic communications. Use of OCLC and the Southern Illinois Library Network (SILNET) has revolutionized resource sharing. The days of relying on the long gone system headquarters collection is most definitely over.

Shawnee's focus for the future remains on a strengthened Southern Illinois Library Network, providing consulting services, delivery of materials, and supporting a strong continuing education program for member library staffs and trustees. While the challenges continue to be daunting, the prospect for the next forty years has much promise for library services.

THE FUTURE

Roundtable — The State Library looks to the future of library systems

Illinois Libraries asked Illinois State Library Director Anne Craig; former State Library Directors Jean Wilkins and Bridget Lamont; and Patricia Norris, State Library associate director, Library Development Group, to offer their thoughts on the future of Illinois' regional library systems.

What do you see as the major role Illinois' regional library systems should play during the next 20 years?

Anne Craig: I hope the systems and the State Library can partner with libraries of all types to evolve the ways we deliver services to meet our clients' needs. Technology should be at the forefront of every library's agenda. Libraries today must have a web presence and web services; the web is where many clients expect to find our services. In many libraries, more people visit their web sites than come through their front doors. Technology is not a replacement for traditional library services, however. Technology extends the library beyond its previous boundaries and enhances services for many different types of communities.

Jean Wilkins: The world we live in is changing very rapidly for all organizations, and particularly those dealing with technology. Systems can play an integral role in providing opportunities to see, use and learn about products and services that are technology based. This is so necessary and frequently too expensive and time consuming for libraries to do on their own. The systems, in my view, will provide a value added service if they continue to deliver these kinds of opportunities to their membership.

Bridget Lamont: While the systems have adapted in some ways, essentially they are still the basic library systems providing services to libraries in the area. They are library service agencies for libraries. That's not bad, but as life changes around us, I think there are new opportunities for systems. Actually, I see them as regional oversight or coordinating or planning agencies for library and information services. The systems have the advantage of numbers and TYPES of libraries, and I think we haven't made a strong case of what this has meant for the institutions. Systems have made huge investments in real estate, yet they are largely unknown in their communities except to libraries. One can argue this means they know their key constituency, which is good, but it also means they are largely "invisible".

Look at what is going on around us...a global community, downsizing, minimizing the "middle man", person to person services, computer to person services, privatization, outsourcing, downsizing government, regionalization of services, the crisis in education, funding and achievement. As the author Thomas Friedman says, "the world is flat." What lessons can systems learn from all of this?

Patricia Norris: Could the answer be as simple as the three "c's"? I don't mean the typical three "c's" that we normally think about as core services: communication, consulting, and continuing education. Rather, it seems that the regional library systems should target their efforts toward ensuring that all member libraries stay current, connected, and critical. As Elaine Dundon discusses in *The Seeds of Innovation*, our world is facing significant transition due to emerging technologies, the expanding world as everything becomes more accessible, and more demanding customers. The regional library systems will need to seek ways to assist *every* member library in staying strategically poised within their communities and in being relevant and vital players in responding to customer needs. At times the systems and the member libraries will need to be catalysts to change; at other times they will need to be the change agents themselves.

In addition, I remain very concerned about the digital divide and the dramatically changing demographics within Illinois. The future holds every potential to increase the divide between the “have’s” and the “have nots.” Our multitype library community will always have smaller institutions with fewer staff, tight budgets, and less resources—no matter what type of library. The challenges will only increase to help these libraries stay current, connected, and critical as lifelines for their communities. It is important that the regional library systems commit expertise and leadership in working with libraries at both ends of the spectrum—championing innovation for the “have’s” and challenging the status quo of the “have nots.” Again, it boils down to ensuring that all Illinois libraries stay current, connected, and critical to society.

Is there anything the systems are not currently doing that you believe they could be doing in the future?

AC: Along with the State Library, the systems will need to evaluate their role in the changing world in which we live. Are the systems going to continue in all ways as they always have, or will new roles be added while obsolete roles are shed? This trek is one that the systems and the State Library must take together. It is, in fact, an examination of mission and, ultimately a statement of the good we hope to do in our communities.

JW: I have two points for this question. Some systems take personal contact with the members seriously, while others need to work on it. However, I believe completely that visiting and seeing the staff in their own setting is invaluable to system staff. The good that comes from a personal visit will be returned many times over. I well understand the difficulty of doing this on a regular basis, but I see no substitute for it. The insights gained from such a visit are helpful in determining both program and organizational needs that may not be gathered in other ways.

Continue the good efforts related to advocacy. Every library in the state, no matter the size, should be involved in advocacy. This takes time and lots of contact to be successful. I think of the groups that gather each spring in front of the State Capitol. We are involved in worthwhile programs, but when no one is aware, talking all day to each other will accomplish nothing. I remember the slogan of the Illinois Valley Library System – “Not alone but together”. Those are good words for now.

BL: I see several possibilities for systems. They can serve as technology and/or information incubators, opening up to non-library institutions and providing space and consulting services to information entrepreneurs in their region. Systems could be reformatted into regional coordinating agencies such as those in place for transportation, regional planning and health care services. Have 3 throughout the state, with partial funding from the state and other funding from fee-based services. A board would govern the agencies, with some members elected at large and others appointed by county chairmen. Such a redesign would raise the visibility of libraries.

Systems could serve as niche agencies, providing literacy services and workforce retraining in partnership with other community based organizations. Another agency could offer continuing education, not only for libraries but also in partnerships specializing in organizational behavior, group processes, working with not for profit agencies. Another niche agency could work solely on education related issues; we always say libraries are part of education and with ILLINET, we have a leg “up” in that we work with elementary and secondary education through their school libraries. Systems could become regional information agencies and work with other agencies, conducting research for local government agencies, serving as “think tanks” in terms of research and publishing papers on regional issues. (libraries are in the information business)

Lastly, at least in some locations, get rid of the real estate and make some money. Set up a true consulting center for area libraries, with architects, urban planners, and attorneys on retainer; hire the

best grant writers to help local libraries put proposals together and use the grant writers to bring money to the “systems”. In this scenario, we’re talking about literally “cleaning the slate”.

PN: While each of the regional library systems is mandated by the *Standards for the Services of Illinois Multitype Library Systems* to provide particular core services, it seems that as the systems have grown and developed over the years, they each have developed strengths in different areas. All the systems are working diligently to provide quality services to the member libraries and continue to seek new means of enhancing services. But in addition, some regional library systems have really refined their expertise in distinct arenas, for example: in their advocacy efforts; in marketing; in cataloging and bibliographic access, etc. Perhaps more effort could be made to share these areas of specialization and expertise and to think more globally.

What do you see as the greatest strengths of Illinois’ regional library systems?

AC: Library systems are “equalizers,” that is, they give smaller libraries the resources and tools to participate in network activities, and larger libraries the opportunity to build partnerships with other types of libraries. Every library is of value; every library has something to offer the network. Systems enable libraries to shine, to contribute unique value to the network.

JW: They are local and they represent that perspective at the library level. We all like a local response, whether it is a call to the electric company, department store or the public library. Systems embody the local practices and culture and know the political lay of the land. They’ve established local relationships and that’s a good tool to have.

BL: Their greatest strengths come from assisting in the development of local public library service; supporting the expansion of ILLINET; their sharing of authority; moving from pure providers of services to facilitating services; and their strong emphasis on continuing education.

PN: Multitype cooperation and networking. Isn’t it amazing that in Illinois we don’t even think anything but “multitype” anymore, when most state’s library networks still don’t understand what multitype means! With the ultimate goal in Illinois of our academic, public, school and special libraries connecting citizens to the information and resources that they need, we cannot afford to think of ourselves as 4000 separate libraries or separate regional library systems. We are truly a multitype network that has cooperated without compensation for 40 years. Collectively we understand that it is to the end users’ benefit to be mutually dependent on each other. With technology making access to information and resources easier all the time, it still boils down to the multitype cooperative spirit of the people within our library community that ensures this philosophy and its continuance. The State Library, the regional library systems, and their member libraries have developed an exemplary model of library cooperation.

Let’s take at least one look back. Do you have a personal “most memorable moment” that involves the systems?

AC: My favorite moment is when the Statewide Illinois Library Catalog went live: the decades of hard work of the regional library systems shined through in the flick of a switch. It was a great moment.

JW: For me it has to be working with system directors, boards and staff during the Moen study. It was not the most popular undertaking, but I believe it gave all of us a good snapshot about where we were with automation. Current information was invaluable and I have to think it pointed the way to some things that should/could come in the future.

BL: My special moments involve a lot of individuals. I recall Illinois Valley LS director Ray Howser telling us to “go forth and multitype!” As one of 2 “guinea pigs” in an experiment with “junior system consultants”, I remember attending my first North Suburban LS board meeting—and the aftermath phone call between Bob McClarren and Al Trezza! I can’t forget Al Trezza and former CPL director

Alex Ladenson facing off at system directors and presidents meetings—two “little” but not gentle giants of libraries. At quarterly SP&D meetings during discussions of system funding, I recall Bob McClarren from North Suburban speaking up for per capita funding based on the growing suburban population, and Jim Ubel from Shawnee speaking up for counting all the trees in the Shawnee National Forest in his system, the old per capita and area formula. I remember the state budget funding crisis and resultant 1/3 rd cut to systems funding; telephoning the systems; the aftermath; bomb sniffing dogs at the State Library, and local police checks at my home and even at our vacation home in Michigan! Finally, I remember announcing the reorganization of BPH services through the systems under what I thought was a plan that had been agreed to by the system directors. This resulted in a great learning experience for me trying to explain systems to a new administration, and then going on the road with Mike Lawrence, Jim Edgar’s press secretary, to newspaper editorial boards and local radio stations to explain the service and plans.

PN: It is more than a moment, but rather a process. I absolutely cherish the memories of preparing our state for the July 1991 White House Conference on Library and Information Services. The Illinois State Library worked in concert with the regional library systems and the Illinois White House Conference Steering Committee to lead our library community through forums, discussions, and planning on how Illinois libraries would deliver library service in the 21st century. Chicago became the first U.S. city to host a statewide conference in April 1990 with “Literacy, Productivity, and Democracy” as its theme. This was followed by nine regional conferences throughout Illinois in October 1990, and culminated with the White House Conference in Washington, D.C. with President George H. W. Bush delivering one of the keynote addresses. About 1,000 librarians, trustees and citizens participated in a process that lasted more than a year, to design and build the “Illinois Information Agenda.” It was such an honor to serve as the Illinois White House Conference Coordinator and to witness our library community work with passion, commitment, and foresight during this national period of reflection upon the way in which people acquire and use information, and the relationship of libraries and the impact of information.

Library Networks, Cooperatives, and Consortia: A Definitional Study and Survey

by Denise M. Davis

(Denise M. Davis is director of the Office for Research & Statistics for the American Library Association.)

Libraries and library organizations, as well as national, state, and regional policy planners are forced to rely upon outdated information about library cooperatives and networks due to a lack of valid definitions and inadequate data collection methods for these collaborative organizations. In September, 2005 the American Library Association (ALA) was awarded a National Leadership Grant in the category Research and Demonstration by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to study this issue (http://www.ims.gov/whatsnew/current/092005_nlg.htm).

For all intents and purposes, we know nothing about the recent state of cooperatives, since the last comprehensive study of cooperatives was dated 1986. This research project will be led by me, and result in a clear and current understanding of how library networks and cooperatives operate, and the many ways in which these collaborative organizations help to advance learning communities. To accomplish this, researchers will first define what library networks and cooperatives are, and then describe the kinds of services they now provide. This will help us better understand the future trends that will affect these multi-type library entities. The Association of Specialized and Cooperative Library Agencies (ASCLA) will provide on-going support, encouraging participants from the base study to regularly update their directory information and the data derived from the surveys. Updating is expected to occur biennially, and will be facilitated by a web-based form.

What are library networks and what do they do?

Networks and cooperatives were first formed in the 1960s to leverage staff and resources, in order to provide cost-effective and efficient services that libraries individually could not afford. It was through these early networks and cooperatives that library automation was initially introduced and pioneering efforts in statewide resource sharing began. As collaboration flourished, these burgeoning networks relied primarily on federal funding from the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA). By using federal funds to match local funds, many states were able to build early networks and cooperatives, primarily consisting of public libraries. With the revision of federal block grants to libraries, and the new guidelines established by the Library Services and Technology Act (1996), multi-type library cooperation was encouraged. This federal support promoted the development of learning communities, by leveraging local partnerships to advance projects that otherwise might not have succeeded had only local or state funding been available.

As the world of libraries changed, other services became the business of networks and library cooperatives. Frequently, services initiated by networks were later integrated into the daily operations of individual libraries. Examples of such pioneering services included: Internet connectivity and training; teleconferencing; services to special populations; distance learning; database licensing and training; “E-Rate” discount applications and technology planning, eBook and eJournal acquisitions; and most recently, digital virtual reference services. Had it not been for the early development of networks, individual libraries would have spent considerably more, both in real dollars and staff time, to develop the necessary expertise to implement these new services.

Why is there a data gap?

To better understand the urgent need for this study, it is important to briefly review the results of past research efforts. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) administered three surveys of library networks and cooperatives, the first in 1977-78, the second in 1985-86, and the third in 1997.

The findings of the 1977-78 and 1985-86 studies were published, but the results of the 1997 study were not. The primary reason for not publishing this 1997 study had to do with the poor definition that was used to describe the universe of library networks and cooperatives, as well as the poor quality of responses from those surveyed. In fact, the 1997 study was so problematic that NCES has since repeatedly declined to conduct another survey of this group.

In 1994, ASCLA outlined a series of research agendas at its Executive Board meeting. Topics included: the future of cooperative libraries; funding; education requirements; planning and decision-making; measures of productivity and value; client/user satisfaction measures; and issues relating to cooperation. With the discontinuation in 1989 of ASCLA's series *The Report on Library Cooperation*, and the lack of regular data collection for this group, the organization that was best positioned to provide the lead for research on library cooperatives must now rely on others.

In a study conducted between 2000 and March 2003 by library consultants Himmel & Wilson (<http://www.libraryconsultant.com/LibrarySystems.htm>), they reported on some of the characteristics found in exemplary multi-type cooperative library systems, commenting that nearly 50% of those surveyed had formed its system in the 1960s. Since 1997, library literature about consortia, networks and cooperatives indicates a shift from cooperative purchasing of library automation systems to an environment of cooperative purchasing of materials and services – specifically electronic materials and services. As state library agencies continue to take the lead in statewide database purchases, often using federal funds to do so, it becomes even more critical to understand how these library cooperatives form, are governed, operate, merge, or disband.

By collecting useful baseline information about networks and cooperatives, the results of this research study will:

- Benefit other networks and cooperatives in understanding their peers, the services they could provide, alternative funding models, governance issues, and future trends;
- Support governing authorities in planning for new services, by helping them understand and articulate the value of multi-type library cooperatives, and the way these collaborations improve learning communities at the local, regional, state, multi-state, and national levels;
- Create a baseline of data upon which researchers may build, allowing for the first-time formulation of a research agenda that can investigate the long-term impact of library cooperation on communities, education and the society at-large;
- Provide current information about groups of libraries that presently fall outside mainstream library data collection efforts. (Funding entities, including the Institute of Museum and Library Services, will benefit from this study by having current information with which to better understand the impact of their funding);
- Support advocacy efforts by library associations and other organizations; and
- Provide a basis for understanding that also benefits the business world, such as technology and publishing companies, who have an interest in collaborating with, or providing support for, library networks and cooperatives.

Understanding the range of libraries and organizations operating as networks, cooperatives, and consortia advances one's understanding about the impact of "libraries" more broadly on local, regional, state, and national services, and upon our society as a whole. Understanding the landscape in which these organizations operate further informs the library and research community, as well as governments, regarding the purpose and value of multi-type library organizations. Updating what we know about networks, cooperatives, and consortia also informs the policy agenda for developing sustainable support for the libraries and communities they serve.

References:

Himmel, Ethel and Bill Wilson. Library Systems and Cooperatives. (undated study, but presumed to have been conducted between 2000 and March 2003) <http://www.libraryconsultant.com/LibrarySystems.htm>

Eckard, Helen M. Statistics of Library Networks and Cooperative Organizations, 1977-1978. National Center for Education Statistics. Office of Educational Research and Improvement. 1982. U.S. Department of Education: Washington, D.C.

King, Donald W. Survey of Library Networks and Cooperative Library Organizations: 1985-86. Center for Education Statistics. Office of Educational Research and Improvement. April, 1987. U.S. Department of Education: Washington, DC.

Whither Goest Library Systems and Cooperatives: Will They Wither or Weather the Storm?

by Ethel Himmel and Bill Wilson

(Ethel Himmel & Bill Wilson are consultants who help all types of libraries with their planning, technology, management and building needs. They are located in Milton, Wisconsin.)

What does the future hold for library systems and cooperatives? Will systems and cooperatives remain essential to the health and well being of libraries in the 21st century, or will they be seen as remnants of bygone era? Will the systems and cooperatives that have dissolved in recent years rise again as some other kind of consortia or regional associations of libraries, or will they be soon forgotten? It appears that whether they'll wither or weather the storm is very uncertain.

While both federated public library systems and multitype library cooperatives remain strong in some states, they are dying or have died in others. Regional systems have disappeared in states as diverse as Colorado and Connecticut. Ohio's cooperatives will soon cease to exist in their current form and will be replaced by four dramatically different regional entities. It is legitimate to ask whether this reduction in the number of regional entities represents progress or if the closures signal a deterioration of a support network that will negatively impact the delivery of library and information services to end users.

The big picture is unclear at this time. However, a few things are certain. The demise of many systems and cooperatives has had little to do with the quality of their management or services. Some of the entities that have disappeared probably deserved their fate. They had become irrelevant to all or most of their member libraries. However, other systems and cooperatives were simply caught in the political crossfire. They were important agencies that provided valued services, but they were unable to weather the storm of the anti-taxation mood that has swept across the nation.

For example, the wholesale elimination of Colorado's regional systems had far less to do with the value of the services they offered than it had to do with budget constraints and the politically charged rhetoric related to the so called Taxpayers' Bill of Rights (TABOR). While the effectiveness and strength of Colorado's regional systems varied somewhat, overall, they played an important role that had a positive effect on the quality of library and information services offered in that state.

In both Connecticut and Ohio, systems and cooperatives suffered, at least in part, from a lack of a unified mission. Although some individual entities performed well, as a group within their respective states, systems and cooperatives lacked a shared purpose that was clearly understood by those responsible for allocating funds. In their efforts to respond to local member needs or to carve out a unique niche, they devolved into a mixture of unrelated organizations increasingly misunderstood by public officials, and sometimes, even by their member libraries.

If there is a lesson to be learned from all of this, it is that systems and cooperatives largely dependent on a common funding source must be able to project a mission that is easily comprehended by those who hold the purse strings. This presents a significant challenge. As membership organizations, federated systems and cooperatives clearly must be responsive to their members' needs. Furthermore, those needs can vary significantly based on the mix of sizes, types, and the relative financial health of their members. How can systems meet the needs of their diverse memberships and at the same time present a united front to often skeptical legislators and bureaucrats?

You may recall the advice given to the Benjamin Braddock character played by Dustin Hoffman in the movie *The Graduate*. In this "coming of age" film, a partygoer seeking to offer some sage advice to

young Benjamin simply utters the word “Plastics.” Bill Clinton was quite successful in his first run for the Presidency by constantly reminding voters, “It’s the economy stupid!” If one were to seek a single word or a short phrase to advise library systems and cooperatives, it would have to be “It’s the future, stupid!” The long term viability of regional library systems and cooperatives lies in their recognizing that their core business isn’t automation, continuing education, interlibrary loan, delivery service or technology support – the core business of successful systems and cooperatives is “the future.”

While systems and cooperatives perform a wide variety of services, system administrators and staff who get bogged down in thinking that they are about processes rather than about helping libraries meet the challenges of the future are likely to find themselves on the unemployment line. Offering quality services that are valued by member libraries is important; however, systems and cooperatives that offer services without an eye to the future simply create situations in which the weakest of libraries become dependent on the system and fail to develop and in which the strongest of libraries view system services as inconsequential.

Healthy systems serve as the research and development arm of their member libraries. They act as a catalyst. They constantly challenge their members to innovate, to extend themselves and to adopt emerging best practices, regardless of whether they are found in other libraries or in the commercial sector.

Unfortunately, adopting this future stance will not immunize systems and cooperatives from wholesale cuts that have little to do with the quality of library service. It does, however, increase the likelihood that a chorus of voices will be raised to counteract such actions.

At the end of the day, some systems and cooperatives may wither and others may weather the storm. In the interim, those organizations that design their program of services with an eye to the future are far more likely to lift their member libraries to new heights, and to ensure users of higher quality library and information services.

Q&A—Outside Looking In

Illinois Libraries asked two experts on library systems from outside Illinois — Linda Crowe and Dottie Hiebing — for their thoughts on the future of systems. Linda is executive director of the Bay Area Library and Information System in San Mateo, CA. Dottie Hiebing is executive director of the Metropolitan New York Library Council in New York, NY.

What process/processes should be developed by systems to keep in touch with the needs of their members?

Linda: Systems should do a strategic plan every three years that includes an implementation plan. Continuous monitoring will provide the plan with continuity and signal necessary changes if there are environmental changes.

Dottie: Systems are becoming more sophisticated in the ways they discover members' needs, such as using online surveys and focus groups. Advances in technology will allow for quicker and more two-way communication between systems and their members. This in turn will enrich the systems' understanding of their members' needs.

How can members and systems work together to the benefit of both?

Linda: I think in this precarious economic environment, systems' basic purpose comes into play: "it is to help libraries provide services as a group that they could not afford as single entities". The services can be identified by the strategic plan and activities designed by both members and systems working together to develop cost benefits.

Dottie: Members will be pulled in different directions to belong to many consortia in the future. Improved customer service techniques will be one of the criteria by which members will decide on membership in systems and consortia. The process of negotiating contracts and services will gain importance so that both members and systems benefit.

How can systems position themselves to integrate into members' structure?

Linda: Again, it is important to develop services that libraries and systems agree are needed. The libraries should be able to share in providing the services by working with system staff. Examples are shared technology and/or provision of leadership to help libraries obtain services or products. Libraries should look first to the system to negotiate in the broadest sense for them.

What kinds of services will systems provide to members in the future?

Linda: I am not sure what new services systems will be providing to members in the future, but I do envision an expansion of technology-based services. It may be traditional services delivered through new technologies that provide cost benefits through group purchase.

Dottie: Future services will depend on the future of libraries. I don't believe that systems will offer the "hand holding" services that they have been known for in the past. Rather, the range of services could go from systems actually staffing members' organizations to systems serving as think tanks where their members can go to think through their problems. If hard economic times hit the members, the systems could help negotiate partnerships among members so they can benefit from economies of scale. The systems could also offer to do grant writing for their members, or provide outsourcing activities when there are member layoffs.

What kinds of skills will system staff need in the future?

Linda: System staff will need skills that are not necessarily learned in library school; these skills include: finance, technology, negotiation, facilitation and strategic thinking. System staff needs to be nimble and supplement the skill set of librarians in member libraries.

Dottie: I think that systems will begin using more consultants and fewer full-time, paid staff for several

reasons. Full time staff members with benefits will continue to be very costly. Consultants will allow system administrators to focus on results—if the results aren't there, the consultants' contracts can be terminated. Systems will have more flexibility if they use several consultants with knowledge and expertise in several areas instead of relying on staff whose skills and experience will get old the longer they work with the systems. Consultants are exposed to many different institutions, and they gather knowledge from those experiences that they bring to their consulting work. Though there are a few negatives to using consultants, they are outweighed by the benefits.

What governance model will be most effective in the future?

Linda: I think 501C 3's, non-profits, are the most flexible and sensible structures for systems. Many systems are governmental agencies that may not allow for private funding or broad-based board members.

System Directors and System Dates

Alliance Library System—July 1, 1994-Present

Valerie Wilford—1994-2004

Kitty Pope—2004-Present

Bur Oak Library System—April 1967-1993

Charles D. DeYoung—1968-1975

Peter James McElhinney—1975-1991

Joe McElroy—1992-1993

Chicago Public Library/Chicago Public Library System

Gertrude Gscheidle—1950-1967

Dr. Alex Ladenson—1967-1974

David L. Reich—1975-1978

Donald Sager—1978-1981

Amanda Rudd—1982-1985

James Lowry (interim)

John Duff—1985-1992

Robert Remer (acting)—1992-1993

Karen Danczak-Lyons—1993, 2005 (interim/acting)

Mary A. Dempsey—1993-present

Chicago Multitype Library System

Alice Calabrese—1991- 6/31/2003

Corn Belt Library System—1966 -June 30, 1994

Henry Meisels—January 3, 1967-September 30, 1988

Jay Wozny—January 1989- August 1993

Clayton Highum—September 1993-June 1994

Cumberland Trail Library System—April 1966-July 1,1992

Glenn Dockins—1967-1988

John A. Moorman—1989-1992

DuPage (County) Library System—December 1966-Present

Alice McKinley—1967—1989

Alice Calabrese—1989-1991

Pam Feather—1991- 12/31/2000

Shirley May Byrnes— 11/27/2000-Present

Great River Library System—1966-June 30, 1994

Stillman K. Taylor— June 1967-1980

Travis Tyer—1980-1994

Heritage Trail Library System 1993-2004

Joseph McElroy—1993-2000

Sandy B. Ringstrom—2000- 6/30/2004

Illinois Valley Library System—March 1966-June 30, 1994

William Bryan—1960-1970

Ray Howser—1970-1983

Kenneth Sertic—1983-1987

Valerie Wilford—1987-1994

Kaskaskia Library System—April 11, 1967-1993

Edgar Chamberlain—1966-1989

Deanna Snowden—1990-1993

Lewis and Clark Library System—November 9, 1966-Present

Mary T. Howe—May 2, 1966-August 31,1971

Jack L. Prilliman—December 20, 1971-January 31, 1976
Neil C. Flynn—June 1, 1976-October 17, 1979
J. Alexi Fosse—October 18, 1979-October 10, 1986
Margaret M. Stefanak—February 17, 1987-June 30, 1998
Susan Lucco—June 15, 1999-February 2, 2005
Charm Ruhnke (interim)—February 2 - October 14, 2005
Athena J. Hubert—October 15, 2005-Present

Lincoln Trail Libraries System—January 11, 1966-Present

Robert Carter—1966-1969
Anthony Baldarotta—1970-1977
Elaine Albright—1977-1983
Jan Ison—1983-Present

Metropolitan Library System—July 1, 2004-Present

Alice Calabrese— 7/1/2004-Present

North Suburban Library System—November 1966-Present

Robert McClarren—1965-1989
Sarah Long—1989-Present

Northern Illinois Library System—1966-June 30, 2004

Jack Chitwood—1966-1976
Lila Brady—1976-1991
Patricia Lund—1992-1993
Marlene Deuel—1994-1999
Jan Eakin Jones—1999- 6/30/2004

Prairie Area Library System—July 1, 2004-Present

Robert W. McKay— 7/1/2004-Present

River Bend Library System—July 1966-June 30, 2004

George Curtin—1966-1983
Robert W. McKay—1983-6/30/2004

Rolling Prairie Library System—March 1, 1966-Present

Elizabeth Edwards 1965- September, 1971
Ray Ewick 1972-1978
Robert Plotzke 1978- 6/30/2005
Beverly J. Obert 7/1/2005—Present

Shawnee Library System—March 1, 1966-Present

James Ubel—1966-2000
Walter Burkhalter—2000-2002
Joe Harris—2002-Present

Starved Rock Library System—July 1, 1967-1993

Lou Ann Boone—1967-1971
Mary T. Howe—1971-1977
Richard E. Wilson—1977-1993

Suburban Library System—1966-June 30, 2004

Lester L. Stoffel—January, 1967-November, 1985
Barbara Manchak (interim)
James M. O'Brien—January, 1986—June 1996
Louise McAulay—July, 1996-August, 2003
Alice Calabrese (interim) - August, 2003-6/30/2004

Western Illinois Library System—March 1, 1966-June 30, 1994

Camille Radmacher—1966-1982
Sherwood Kirk—1983-1994

Illinois State Library Directory

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Winner, RonYouth Services, FSCS Data Coordinatorrwinner@ilsos.net217-785-1168

2005 Illinois State Library Advisory Committee

Name	Term Expires
Barbara Aron, Winnetka-Northfield Public Library District, Winnetka.....	2006
Bradley Baker, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago.....	2008
Yvonne Beechler Bergendorf, Wood Dale Public Library District.....	2006
Patricia Burg, Illinois State Museum, Springfield.....	2008
Barbara Burroughs, Chillicothe.....	2008
Gail Bush, Dominican University, River Forest	2006
Alice Calabrese, Chicago Library System	2008
Kang Moy Chiu, Chicago	2006
Lynda Clemmons, Harrisburg	2006
Mary Dempsey, Chicago Public Library	Ex officio
John Dittmer, Bowen	2006
Kristine Hammerstrand, CARLI, Champaign.....	2008
Diane Harmon, Joliet Public Library.....	ILA President
Joe Harris, Shawnee Library System	2008
Kay Langston, Triton College.....	2006
Barry Levine, Homer Glen	2008
Carol Little, Auburn.....	2008
Barbara Lund, Lisle Senior High School	2006
Robert McKay, Prairie Area Library System, Coal Valley	2008
Chadwick Raymond, Northbrook Public Library	2008
Becky Robinson, Galesburg.....	2008