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**Newsletter of the Rocky Mountain Chapter**  
**(<http://www.sla.org/chapter/crmt/>)**

Contents:	
From the President.....	1,4
Susan S. Dimattia.....	3
Colleague Connection.....	4
Southwest Regional Conference II.....	5
Painting the Big Picture by Linda Van Wert.....	6
Make a Date With Yourself.....	7

### *From the President - Mark E Estes*

I see special librarians having more fun than they have now. Why? Not because work will be any easier, but because fun and joy are essential to quality customer service. And customer service more than anything else defines special librarianship in the future.

Customer service responds to what the customer values, not just what the customer says they want. Addressing what the customer values keeps us focused on solving their information need instead of just their information want. Focusing on the information need helps align us with the strategic business purposes of our employer. Alignment with business purposes makes our value to our employer more apparent.

Given our understanding of customer service, of delivering what the customer values and not just what we want to deliver, we have a tremendous opportunity and challenge to teach to our customers to balance self-reliance with the wisdom of consulting an expert.

Delivering exceptional customer service means we must better understand our customers - both the immediate internal ones and the external ones. In the past we organized external information or internal information. In the future we will organize information and create systems to collect information about our customers so that we can answer their questions better but also to deliver it to them in their preferred format. We will also learn their responsibilities within the organization and outside the organization because their information needs change as their responsibilities change.

By organizing information about our customers so that we can better serve them we also serve as community organizers. Transforming the role of the physical library as a community focal point into a role of librarian as community organizer who furthers the sense of the organization as community and as sub-groups like practice groups or subject departments. We will articulate the information technology competencies needed to fully participate in such a community.

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***Susan S. Dimattia, President of SLA  
SYNERGIES FOR YOUR  
PROFESSIONAL FUTURE***

Susan S. Dimattia, President of SLA for 1999 – 2000, will be the featured speaker at the upcoming RMC-SLA special program and meeting on March 20, 2000. Susan will address the membership on a topic of interest to all, the future of librarianship.

Dimattia has been an SLA member since 1965 and has served in many chapter, division and Association capacities during those years. She has been an active member of four SLA chapters, edited the bulletin of the Library Management Division, and has chaired the Business and Finance Division. She is a mentor in the Diversity Leadership Development Program; sat on the Board of Directors as chapter cabinet chair-elect and chair (1994-96); was on the Professional Development Committee (1992-94); and has taught the professional development course, “Adding Value to Corporate Information Services.” Beyond her duties as President of SLA, Dimattia is editor Cahners Business Information and is also visiting associate professor, Pratt Institute School of Information and Library Science.

Dimattia holds a bachelors degree in English and economics from Wilson College and a masters of library science from Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science.

She received an MBA from University of Connecticut Graduate School of Business Administration. She and her husband, Ernie, live in Stamford, Connecticut where he is President and Executive Director of the Ferguson Library.

**WHERE:**U.S. West, downtown Denver, 1801 California St., Suite 105. Go to Library on 1<sup>st</sup> floor to receive instructions to the large conference center on the 13<sup>th</sup> floor. The building has above ground covered parking and there is also parking just south of the building.

**WHEN:**March 20, 2000 (Monday)

**TIME:**5:00 – 8:30 pm. (program is scheduled for 6:00pm)

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Light refreshments will be served, courtesy **Cahners Publishing.**

Library tours will be available.

*President's column continued*

Through building communities, we further our understanding of end users so that we can apply techniques and technologies from other disciplines to better retrieve, evaluate and manipulate information. End users will retrieve more themselves than they do now, but we'll be busier than before building those systems and doing even more complex research. Because we're paying closer attention to our customers we will see new opportunities to partner in new activities to better serve the organizational community or the public at large. These opportunities might be a new publication in a new format (with an existing publisher - or a new cooperative created by special librarians and a subset of our customers) or a new service for pro se patrons. (By encouraging new authors, new titles, new formats and new publishers we will break the cycle of continued higher than Consumer Price Index price increases for the specialty texts our customers need.)

Keeping up with our customers requires a greater emphasis on continuing education. CE becomes part of our job descriptions; personal business plans will incorporate learning objectives and the resources -- time and dollars to accomplish those objectives. We'll get our CE from lots of different sources: professional associations, colleges and universities, new "Librarian CE provider companies" in all the ways we do now and perhaps by choice subliminally while we "relax" watching a movie on our home entertainment system.

So where's the fun and joy in all this? It's the thrill of meeting those challenges of creating information solutions so that the customer says, "Wow, I didn't know I needed that -- it's better than what I asked for" so that we can say, "you're welcome I appreciated the challenge."

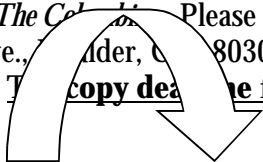
## THANKS TO ALL!!

### COLLEAGUE CONNECTION: Web Technologies in Libraries

From Linda Van Wert

Thank you to the panelists, Dan Maas, Lynne Fox, Sam Sortore, and Jamie LaRue for a very successful Colleague Connection! Although Jamie LaRue said you cannot have statistics that are both "useful and interesting," our panel was not only interesting and useful, but also entertaining and inviting of discussion. I credit Dan Maas with generating the idea of having a panel joining librarians with technology specialists discussing "Web Technologies in Libraries," and I thank Deb Grealy and Laura Hohmann at DU for helping to make it all happen. I am only sorry that we were not able to accommodate all of the extra, last minute people who didn't have dinner reservations. Next year, we'll do it again, perhaps at the Pepsi Center!

**?Editor on Leave for Next Issue:** Jane Hoinville will be on leave (NEW BABY!!) for the next issue of *The Columbine*. Please submit manuscripts, notices, etc. to Barb Greenman, 2877 Moorhead Ave., Boulder, CO 80303, 303-492-1859 or e-mail to [greenman@stripe.colorado.edu](mailto:greenman@stripe.colorado.edu).  
The copy deadline for the next issue of *The Columbine* is **April 30, 2000**



## ***Be Ahead of the Curve!***

*The second SLA Southwest Regional Conference, is coming up fast. The Conference will be held in beautiful San Diego April 5 - 7, 2000 at the Shelter Pointe Hotel and Marina.*

*The theme for the Southwest Regional Conference II: Ahead of the Curve, reminds us that we must always be striving to stay one step ahead of technology and our competitors.*

- ***Keynote speakers,***

***Rich Wiggins, on Technology Change, Howard McQueen on the Merging of Information Industries, and Wendy Schultz on Futures: Research in the Information World.***

- ***Breakout sessions will feature***

*Sharon Cline McKay on **Changes in Access/Delivery of Scholarly Journals**, Johann van Reenen on **The Electric Leader: Managing Information Workers in an Electronic Universe**, Beatrice Kovacs on **In Class, Web Class, Out Class: Distance Education at Work**, Richard Fletcher on **Think Like an Information Futurist**, Mike Silber on **Scenario for the Library of the Future**, Buzzy Basch on **E-Negotiation**, and Joan Buntzen on **Trends Toward Electronic Collections in the U.S. Navy**. These sessions take place on Thursday, April 6 and Friday, April 7.*

- ***Continuing Education courses***

*Rich Wiggins on **Choosing Appropriate Internet Technologies and on Web Media: Understanding a Panoply of Formats**, Jane Dysart and Steve Abrams on **Re-Creating Your Services with New Technologies and From Librarian to Cybrarian: Taking Charge of Our Future**. These courses, each a half-day in length, will be offered on Wednesday, April 5.*

*The web site for the conference, <http://www.sla.org/conf/swrc/>, provides program details and registration information. We hope you will join your colleagues in San Diego and "Be Ahead of the Curve!"*

## **PAINTING THE BIG PICTURE**

# SLA's Leadership Institute

by Linda Van Wert

In January, I was privileged to attend the SLA Leadership Institute in St. Louis. Approximately 300 people attended, including Division chairs and Chapter presidents, president-elects, and other representatives. This year the program accommodated both experienced leaders familiar with the organization, and newcomers such as myself, providing a variety of session options. I learned how the various units functioned and noted those contacts within the organization who could foster our efforts. There was time to network with the executives and to meet the new candidates for office. The amount of energy and expertise in the group was impressive. Even the course on Roberts Rules of Order was entertaining and provided tricks in conducting a successful meeting.

One of the many useful sessions concerned recruiting and motivating volunteers. SLA membership has dropped in the last two years and ideas were offered on promoting the benefits of membership and retaining members. In other meetings, ideas on partnering with library schools or other professional organizations were discussed. A town meeting offered chapter leaders the chance to speak out on issues such as whether they feel represented by the larger organization and changes they would like to see. Obstacles for the chapters included being too large in size, or too small, or geographically dispersed. Solutions for fostering geographically dispersed chapters such as the Rocky Mountain Chapter were videoconferencing or holding meetings simultaneously in various areas of the chapter. SLA is planning changes to its' web site in order to make it easier to navigate. Critics thought that the web site did not promote special librarians, with too many rules and not enough information. The

new web site is intended to support e-commerce for SLA by making publications available for purchase. The task of redesigning the website has been outsourced to a website design firm. One of the most controversial topics at the meeting concerned changing the name of SLA. People were divided on whether "SLA" conveys the dynamic aspects of modern knowledge professionals or not. SLA is hiring a firm to investigate the potential name change and design possible changes.

Watching the SLA Board was an opportunity to actually see the dynamic workings of the organization. Detailed discussion centered on a legal recommendation to change many of SLA's "policies" to "practices" in order to make them less binding legally. Other discussions included: allocation of a large donation from the Weeks estate, ALA external accreditation update, caucus activities, and the Global Strategy Implementation update. Attending the meeting provided me with insight of the big picture, of SLA as an vital organization, where our Chapter fits on the canvas, how it is being skillfully steered into the future, and ways that proactive leadership can shape our profession.

## **MAKE A DATE WITH YOURSELF!**

### **THE UN-MEETING FUNDRAISER FOR THE COLORADO LIBRARY POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE**

Pay to attend a meeting that doesn't happen! ...so that a good cause is supported and YOU get to do something you really want to do.

HERE'S HOW....

1. Make a date with yourself.
2. Pick the day, pick the time, pick your favorite companion (maybe it's yourself!).
3. Schedule the activity: movie with a friend, send the kids out and take a bubble bath, get a massage, read a book, go to dinner with someone you haven't seen in ages...you get the idea.
4. **SEND THE DONATION CHECK!** Save travel time, there's no meeting to attend, just send your check made out to "Colorado Library PAC" in any amount to:

Colorado Library PAC  
P. O. Box 452  
Lafayette, CO 80026

OR  
Druet Cameron Klug  
Holme Roberts & Owen  
1700 Lincoln, Suite 4100  
Denver, CO 80203-4541

We need your donations to help with the ongoing effort to lobby and educate the community about the state funding campaign (Senate Bill #85) and what it means for libraries.

And remember to enjoy the time you saved!

**"INVEST IN LIBRARIES: FUND THE FUTURE"**