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Allison Evatt

I remember my first Georgia SLA meeting, the annual business meeting in May 1996. I had just completed my first semester at the School of Information Sciences at the University of Tennessee. I was so impressed by the people I met that day and knew that I wanted to get involved. I had no idea that one day I would have the honor of serving as president of the chapter. Dreams do come true, however, and not only do I have the privilege of serving, I have the opportunity to do so for eighteen months. SLA has changed the governance year to run from January through December, so current officers will hold their positions from July 2005 until December 2006.

Speaking of extended terms, I want to thank Gail Stahl for serving as chapter president much longer than anticipated. Gail’s leadership and organizational skills have been invaluable as she guided the chapter to great success.

Brian McGreevy, our chapter president-elect, and the program committee are busy organizing events for the year. Mark your calendar now for the holiday party on Tuesday, December 13. We always have a great time at this event, so you don’t want to miss it.

Finally, in order to be sure you know about our programs, please be sure to update your record on the SLA website if your contact information has changed. Announcements are sent via email and to the chapter discussion list.

Thanks very much and I look forward to serving as chapter president.

Allison Evatt
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Treasurer’s Report - Practice What You Preach
Ernie Evangelista

Sports fans know that walkin’ the walk is far more effective than talkin’ the talk.

As we begin a new year for the chapter, you may recall this excerpt from my June 2005 column: “As chapter treasurer, my work becomes more interesting and fun when we have funds to spend. Perhaps, the chapter can try new ideas for programming and professional development. Maybe, our programs can be held in locations OUTSIDE the metro Atlanta area to draw others from around the state…To grow, any organization must challenge itself to innovate and be willing to stretch beyond its ‘comfort zone’.”

Our programming and newsletter publication schedules could not accommodate my promotion of our October 5 program at the facilities of the Georgia Archives and The National Archives Southeast Region (administered by the National Archives and Records Administration), in Morrow, Georgia. I hope that, at least, you were aware of this program, hosted by both archives agencies, which was timed to coincide with Georgia Archives Week. Archives staff members were interested in connecting with Atlanta area information professionals and we were interested in visiting both facilities which had opened in the past year. These fortunate circumstances have led to what I hope will be an interesting afternoon.

This program will also accomplish two goals that we have been striving for:

“ To offer demonstrable “local” benefits for one’s SLA membership;
“ To build ties with other library associations in the Atlanta area.

With adequate financial capital to meet chapter needs, the Program Committee did not charge any fees for this chapter event. (Participant efforts to get to the Archives could be payment enough!) Moreover, we decided to open this event to all interested parties for free. We also partnered with the Metro Atlanta Library Association (MALA) to offer multiple opportunities for archives’ visits. MALA invited our chapter members to its National Archives tour on Saturday, September 17. We, in turn, have reciprocated and welcomed MALA members and guests to our program. In this way, we, as individuals, and the chapter, as an SLA entity, have opportunities to develop and grow.

With the football season underway, baseball playoffs in the horizon and basketball and hockey set to begin soon, I’m glad that the Georgia chapter’s doin’ some fine walkin’. Here’s to OUR winning team!

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It's like clockwork: Summer's almost over and soon the fall season will cover the state in a brown blanket of leaves. The end of summer also heralds the annual networking event of the Georgia chapter of the Special Libraries Association. The event offers a perfect opportunity to network with peers and to find out what SLA members did on their summer vacations. The pictures on the following two pages encapsulate this event.

**Networking**

(l-r Ellen Cooper, Ernie Evangelista, Brian McGreevy)
(l-r Karalyn Kavanaugh, Irv Koch, Lauren Benevich, Vickie Leighton; back l-r Irene McMorland, Marilyn Pahr, Sally Griffin, )

(l-r Casey Long, Sally Griffin)
Effective August 1, Susan Klopper is the new Executive Director of the Goizueta Business Library at Emory University. Prior to assuming this position, Susan was the Manager for Research Services, for approximately 2 1/2 years.
An Interview with Ruth A. Pagell: Global Business Librarian
Lateka Grays

Establishing a “contemporary business library with its own identity” was the goal of Ms. Ruth A. Pagell when she visited Emory University’s Woodruff library as a consultant in the fall of 1986. The former executive director of the Goizueta Business Library and currently the new Chief Librarian, Li Ka-shing Library at the Singapore Management University was charged with proposing a new business model to better serve the needs of the faculty and students of the business school. For over ten years, she has worked to accomplish this goal by providing users with access to the best resources, services and information professionals.

When Dr. Joan Gotwals arrived at the end of 1988 as Vice Provost and Dean of Libraries, one of her future plans was to transform the existing business model. A consultancy project was previously initiated in cooperation with the business school to improve the business reference delivery. Ms. Pagell was chosen for this project due in part to her business library management experience as the Associate Director of the Lippincott Library at the University of Pennsylvania. The majority of the recommendations that Ms. Pagell suggested were implemented and greatly shaped the future of the library. They included the creation of a separate division with its own service desk that reported to the Vice Provost, not the business school or any Library department, the distribution of electronic information, the improvement of services to faculty, the physical reorganization of resources and the creation of a director position within the division. The most critical of the recommendations was the structure of reporting directly to the Director of Libraries. This was a better model because of the stability that it offered, as well as the availability to share resources to help reduce operating expenses. When the position to head the business library was established, Ruth seemed a logical choice to head it. In 1994 the “Center for Business Information” (CBI) was established with Ms. Pagell as the Executive Director. Housed temporarily in a converted Electronic Classroom, the library was eventually relocated to its current home in the entrance of the Robert W. Woodruff Library.

How can we benefit the users and where do we as information professionals add value, are the questions Ms. Pagell asked herself to develop the service model for CBI. This developed into her philosophy that the management of a competitive library required to offer users high levels of service and access while continuously marketing the library and its services to improve users’ awareness. Under her leadership, a strong business collection of research materials (print and electronic) was created. The services of the “new” library also grew based upon the existing rapport that previous staff members built with faculty. These services would later include additional funding for faculty requested resources, document delivery, table of content service, research consultation and curriculum support.

By 1996, web-based content came along and could be exploited to offer unique services to the students and faculty of the college. Ms. Pagell researched items to distribute and began to offer remote access to resources such as ABI/Inform and Infotrac. This venture was highly successful, especially with the Executive MBA students who were taking classes at Lenox Mall. Because of this early adoption of web content and electronic resources, user support grew. The library even experimented with desktop video conferencing to deliver database instruction.

The current model or service structure is labor intensive, but Ms. Pagell’s willingness to explore new technology and resources led to new services. Growing demands for those services helped the staff grow from three to ten FTEs. She primarily hired librarians with business educations or corporate experience to enlarge the staff. This led to the recognized value of the library by various departments within the business school and created new partnerships, such as the career reference librarian position. The success of the Goizueta Library could only have been accomplished by working with an innovative, enthusiastic, customer-focused team.

New technologies have also offered opportunities to expand service. The e-mail conference system, FirstClass, allowed users to schedule an appointment with librarians instead of only visiting during reference desk hours. Many of her colleagues were surprised by this move, but many of her peers are moving to this type of structure. She believes that this consultation model better supports the needs of the busy students and the complex nature of the questions received by the staff. Ms. Pagell also understands that it is important to complement the size and the goals of the school, in addition to being a part of student orientation to be seen as a part of the school. All of these efforts help to achieve the Goizueta Business Library’s current goal of “creating bridges for knowledge.”
Ms. Pagell’s next position will be as the Chief Librarian of The Singapore Management University (http://www.smu.edu.sg/). Her move to Singapore was spurred by interesting new challenges and her desire to live in a walkable city. She was initially approached by a recruiter to apply for the position. The University moved into new facilities, including a new library, in the heart of the central city to accommodate its growing student body.

The library had previously out-sourced all of its library services and functions to the National Library Board of Singapore, so this will be an entirely new model for the faculty and students of the school. The challenge will be to market the new services and provide high levels of service while recruiting the staff to implement the changes.

Ms. Pagell's international experience began while working with Michael Halperin at the Lippincott Library at the University of Pennsylvania. Her work with him led to speaking engagements and eventually an ALA fellowship for one year in Bangkok, Thailand at the Asian Institute of Technology. While there, she worked in other library schools and learned about the Thai library community. Her love of travel also created opportunities to speak and consult in places like Slovenia and London. All of this experience prepared her for the new opportunity in Singapore.

When asked about any guidance for librarians or lessons that have helped her in her role as a director, Ms. Pagell gave the following advice:

1. Be open to new things or changes that come along.
2. Don’t rely on one type of decision-making process.
3. You can’t tell your users what they should be using or doing. You must listen to what users are saying and the users’ administration is saying too.
4. Think about what it is that you are trying to accomplish, not the details in getting there.
5. You won’t be perfect.

As a new librarian, I joined the Goizueta Business library team in the fall of 2004. I was given the opportunity to draw from Ms. Pagell’s years of experience by working with her on various projects. Although her international research skills are phenomenal, I was also struck by her ability to see the “big picture” to move the library forward, embrace change, facilitate open communication while moving discussions forward, and encourage her staff to make the most of their strengths to benefit the team. All of these skills are what I believe have helped the Goizueta Business Library to become that “contemporary business library with its own identity” that she sought to create in 1986.

Editor’s Note: Pagell is co-author of the following book:


Lateka Grays is a Woodruff Librarian in-residence with the Goizueta Center for Business Information, Emory University at the time of this article, summer 2005.
Despite unexpected warmer and more humid weather in Toronto, I was reinvigorated by this year’s conference. Though I had already known about blogs and wikis, the conference reinforced these tools as having potential relevance to my daily work at the Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta library. Through a pre-conference program, I shared ideas with others on quantifying and justifying the library’s value to my organization. I was one of lucky hundred or so who attended the two sessions led by Mary Ellen Bates. She talked about podcasts and social networking services (SNS) as she shared her insights and wisdom about Web sites and Web trends. Luckily, Genie Tyburski’s session on sixty sites in sixty minutes was scheduled on the conference’s last day and in a much larger space!

Through the conference keynote speakers, I better understood emerging trends for our customers and was challenged to anticipate the information needs of “Generation Next.” I especially enjoyed hearing Don Tapscott and Gary Hamel. Tapscott, author of The Naked Corporation, reminded us that we are now engaged in the “transparency business” and that the Internet will evolve into the Hypernet. During his talk, Hamel diagnosed inertia and pondered what information would be needed for future business innovation. He also offered five propositions:

- The future is less and less an extrapolation of the past.
- Success has never been so fragile.
- As change accelerates so must the pace of strategic renewal.
- Each of us must become an enemy of entropy.
- We must increase our added value.

My conference experience, however, was not just about programs. It also entailed reconnecting with colleagues near and far. Besides bumping into fellow chapter members (Gail Stahl, Allison Evatt, Brian McGreevy, Marilyn Pahr, Sara June McDavid, Sally Griffin and Elizabeth Shields), I caught up with former chapter members Terry Bennett (my predecessor as Georgia chapter Treasurer) and Kim Whalen (former Peach State Update Production Editor). Federal Reserve librarians also met during the meeting to discuss our collaborative projects. And lastly, I met many interesting librarians from such organizations as Pepsico, the National Academy of Sciences, Baruch College, Merrill Lynch and Coors Brewing Company.

The Exhibit Hall provided a comfortable and central location to browse new products and watch demonstrations. And I certainly enjoyed the conference-related events at the Canadian Hockey Hall of Fame and Canadian Broadcasting Center. And, of course, there was some time to explore the interesting city of Toronto. SLA 2005 will certainly be one of my more memorable conferences: It was informative and entertaining.

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VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

Ever thought you’d like to volunteer to help with SLA Georgia Chapter events, but weren’t sure what was needed - and didn’t want to over-commit???

There are lots of tasks that don’t require lots of time - such as:

- Take photos at a meeting
- Write a summary of a program
- Suggest a topic or speaker
- Help to organize a program
  - Speak at a program
  - Host a program

Yes, successful SLA programs need lots of people - but just a little time from each one.

Contact Allison Evatt  404-352-8053 if you would like to know more.
Special Libraries Association

Georgia Chapter
Atlanta, Georgia