

LIBRAS ANNUAL REPORT

FY2004-2005

OFFICERS

Ted Schwitzner, President
Larry Wild, Vice President/President-Elect
Elaine Fetyko Page, Secretary
Sally Anderson, Treasurer
Luann DeGreve, Past-President and Continuing Education Coordinator

APPOINTMENTS TO STANDING POSITIONS

Sharon Nelson, Communications Director
Rosemary Henders, Co-Chair, Reference/Instruction SIG
June Johnson, Co-Chair, Reference/Instruction SIG
Gretel Stock-Kupperman, Co-Chair, Circulation/ILL SIG
Carol Warner, Co-Chair, Circulation/ILL SIG
Katie Maier, Co-Chair, Serials SIG
Linda Harding, Co-Chair, Serials SIG
Mary Sue Preisler, Co-Chair, Technical Services SIG
Debbie Sarna, Co-Chair, Technical Services SIG
Lisa Gonzalez, Chair, Collection Development SIG

Open Appointments:
Archivist

SUMMARY OF MEMBER PARTICIPATION

For the period July 1, 2004 to May 10, 2005, 14 meetings have been held. All 17 member libraries sent representatives to one or more meetings or programs during 2004-2005. A summary list of this year's meetings includes:

- 2 Directors Meetings
- 2 Executive Committee Meetings
- 1 SIG Chair Meeting
- 2 Major Programs
- 1 Combined-SIG program/meeting
- 3 Individual SIG meetings
- 3 Strategic Planning Committee meetings

OVERVIEW

LIBRAS continues to stand out as a unique organization among the Illinois library community. Evidence of our values of cooperation and networking resulted in many new contributions and developments, with participation coming from all staff levels and all member libraries. SIGs provided major contributions to programming this year, particularly with the popular "Information Literacy 101" program, and the combined SIG program, "Managing Student Employees throughout the Library". Also, we began a

strategic planning process to assess how well we're doing and to identify and build on our strengths to better the organization.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Executive Committee met three times in FY2004-2005. The first meeting, serving as an officers' transition, was held June 29 at North Central College. This meeting included the first use of the newly created "Officers Handbooks," which proved very useful in transferring knowledge between old and new officers. The officers also discussed possible program ideas for the year. The new officers followed up this meeting with a second meeting, August 10, 2004 at North Park University. The focus of this session was to plan the agenda for the Fall Directors Meeting.

The officers met last in conjunction with the Strategic Planning Committee on May 6. The meeting was held by conference call, and most of the Executive Committee members were present to review the Strategic Planning Survey results and to assist in planning the Strategic Planning discussion for the Annual Meeting.

DIRECTORS

Work of the Directors began early in FY2004-2005. Following the request from the Spring 2004 Directors Meeting, Luann DeGreve and Carolyn Sheehy modified and re-presented revised procedures for LIBRAS' Continuing Education program and re-introduced proposed procedures for a Professional Development Grant. These procedures were submitted to the Directors list for electronic voting, and both documents were approved on August 11, 2005 with a vote of 16 for, none against, and one no-vote.

The Fall Directors Meeting was held September 8, 2004 at Judson College. Fourteen directors or their representatives were present either in person or by conference call. The Directors approved the annual budget for the year, which included costs for the major programs, additional support for advocacy at National Library Legislative Day, and funding for public relations materials both for programs and advocacy. Additionally, the Directors approved a new grant program supporting professional research, the LIBRAS Research Grant.

The Spring Directors meeting was held March 9, 2005 at Dominican University. The intent for an early Spring Directors Meeting date was to provide an opportunity to present information to Directors in advance of the Annual Meeting. This would be useful in previewing information to be voted on by the membership. Unfortunately, only ten (10) directors or their representatives were present for this meeting. Vice President Larry Wild presided over this meeting in Ted Schwitzner's absence due to illness. Mr. Wild and Lisa Gonzalez led the directors who were present in a Strategic Planning exercise.

CONTINUING EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In August 2004, the Directors approved a revision to LIBRAS' Continuing Education program. These revisions established a common set of procedures for requesting funds for conferences, workshops and online continuing education opportunities. The revisions included an accountability requirement of a two-page report for anyone receiving continuing education funds. The Continuing Education Coordinator reviews each report for possible program or SIG discussion ideas.

Through May 9, 2005, LIBRAS received and funded 38 continuing education applications. These applications included 18 attendees of the ACRL Conference and 14 requests for the ALA Annual Conference. Other requests cover attendance at conferences ranging from LOEX and Immersion to preconferences on library assessment and support staff development.

Also in August 2004, the Directors approved a new program offering opportunities for enhancing library members' education. The Professional Development program provides \$750 for up to two LIBRAS member staff, in support of coursework for LTA, masters or doctorate level education. The first recipients of this grant were Marilee Brown of Columbia College, and David Osielski of Wheaton College. The Grant Selection Committee consisted of Iva Freeman, Nancy Mactague, and Diane Lisle.

At the September 8, 2004, Directors Meeting, the Directors approved a third grant program that encourages professional research by LIBRAS members. The LIBRAS Research Grant will provide \$750 to one applicant each year in support of travel and costs associated with conducting research. The first year for this grant program will be FY2005-2006.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

In light of the changes taking place throughout the Illinois library community, a strategic planning committee was formed in January 2005. The committee included directors and librarians, and consists of the following members:

Jo Cates
Ayanna Gaines
Lisa Gonzalez
Lynn Hammerlund (resigned from committee, 4/2005)
Ted Schwitzner
Gretel Stock-Kupperman
Larry Wild
Dayle Zelenka

This committee has met three times, February 24, 2005, at Columbia College, in March 18, 2005, at Benedictine University, and May 6, 2005, by conference call. Committee members Larry Wild and Lisa Gonzalez facilitated a "SWOT" analysis with the Directors

at their March meeting. The committee also developed a strategic planning survey which was distributed to the whole membership on April 26, 2005. The results of that survey revealed that many people believe that LIBRAS is doing at least “fairly well” at many of its mission-oriented tasks, and that many find the organization still valuable and relevant, but that there is room for improvement.

A strategic planning discussion will take place at the Annual Meeting to expand on five strategic areas identified through the survey. The committee will take the results of this discussion and formulate recommendations to revitalize LIBRAS for the future.

PROGRAMS

Thanks to the leadership of Larry Wild, LIBRAS presented two professional education programs this year with considerable appeal.

Through the efforts of Rosemary Henders and the Reference/Instruction SIG presented “Information Literacy 101” on November 10, 2004, at St. Xavier University. Speakers Dane Ward and Chad Kahl, both of Illinois State University led the audience in an interactive discussion that addressed theory, technique, style, and cooperation. The program had high appeal from both the LIBRAS community and other Illinois academic libraries. Seventy (70) people attended this program, including 40 member librarians from of 14 LIBRAS institutions. Non-LIBRAS attendees were charged recovery costs for their attendance.

On February 18, 2005, at the Metropolitan Library System headquarters, LIBRAS presented “Library Advocacy: What It’s All About” featuring speaker James Neal of Columbia University. Veronda Pitchford of MLS assisted Larry Wild in the preparation for the program. Illinois State Library Deputy Director Mike Ragen also spoke about current Illinois legislation. The program had a total attendance of 23, including 12 attendees representing eight (8) member libraries.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs)

Each of the four ongoing SIGs—Circulation/ILL, Reference/Instruction, Serials, and Technical Services—included at least one new chairperson. As a means of sharing the idea burden for SIG programming and in reflection of the role of paraprofessionals in each functional area, each SIG featured co-chairpersons—one librarian and one paraprofessional. This arrangement offered some new opportunities for SIG involvement that were not addressed by the former Support Staff SIG, which had not met in FY2004.

Ted Schwitzner and Larry Wild met with most of the SIG co-chairs on July 20, 2004 at Elmhurst College. The ideas generated at this meeting led to the development of a combined SIG-sponsored program on supervising student assistants. Circulation/ILL Co-Chairs Gretel Stock-Kupperman and Carol Warner, and Reference/Instruction Co-Chair June Johnson, developed the program plan, and recruited Belinda Cheek of North Central College to speak. The program titled, “Managing Student Employees throughout the

Library”, was held January 12, 2005 at Columbia College, and was attended by 36 participants representing 11 institutions. Presenters and attendees covered four of the SIGs, and this meeting served as one of the two meetings for each group.

The Technical Services SIG has planned its Spring meeting for May 20, 2005, at Benedictine University. The main topic will be a discussion of OCLC’s Connexion interfaces, and time will be available for other topics as well.

The Serials SIG met on May 4, 2005 at Elmhurst College, and the meeting included 13 participants representing seven member libraries. Dayle Zelenka of North Park University presented information about the WebFeat federated search engine and the SFX link resolver. SIG members also discussed communication issues, and they request that each member library have at least one staff member on the Serials SIG list, LIBRASer. Co-Chair Linda Harding is also investigating the creation of a contact list to be posted on the LIBRAS web site. Meetings dates and locations for 2005-2006 were discussed, and the next meeting is tentatively set for October 2005 at St. Xavier University.

The Circulation/ILL SIG has not planned a second meeting for the year, due to end-of-year commitments for most SIG members. Co-Chairs Gretel Stock-Kupperman and Carol Warner recommend general meeting times of August and October as good times for this SIG to meet.

The Reference/Instruction SIG members were significantly involved in the planning and execution of the “Information Literacy 101” program, and many members served as lunchtime discussion facilitators. Feedback received during these discussions contributed to the development of the SIG’s next meeting, which will give SIG members a chance to demonstrate and view live teaching examples. The next Reference/Instruction SIG meeting will be May 25, 2005 at Lake Forest College.

Following a request from Lisa Gonzalez at Trinity Christian College, and also building on feedback received from other libraries, a Collection Development SIG was formed in September, with Lisa Gonzalez serving as Chairperson. This group met once, on October 13, 2004 at Trinity Christian. Six people attended the meeting, representing three (3) member libraries. The inaugural meeting discussion covered uses of ICCMP collection assessment data. Future possible topics were discussed, including the use of Choice Online Reviews. A second meeting has not yet been scheduled.

ELECTIONS

At the September 2004 Directors Meeting, Communications Director Sharon Nelson reported on the experience with SafeVote, the company and product used for the 2004 elections. Based on a number of difficult customer service issues, she recommended that LIBRAS use a different system for the 2005 election. Survey Monkey, the online survey tool service, was selected as it provides a reasonable amount of privacy for voters.

The 2004-2005 Nominations Committee consisted of Jim Cubit (Lake Forest College), Rosemary Henders (North Central College), and Ursula Zyzik (St. Xavier University). They presented a slate of one candidate for Vice President, three candidates for Secretary, and two candidates for Treasurer. This is the second consecutive year that the Vice-Presidential candidate has run unopposed. Committee members pointed to difficulties in finding qualified candidates for VP who are also willing to commit to the three-year cycle of Vice President-President-Past President.

MEMBERSHIP INQUIRIES

LIBRAS received two membership inquiries during FY2004-2005:

National Louis University inquired about membership in LIBRAS. In November 2004, Kathy Walsh, Dean of the University Library contacted Ted Schwitzner regarding the membership requirements and obligations. Schwitzner met in December with Ms. Walsh regarding the requirement on a four-year, liberal arts core function. NLU has a core focus on undergraduate degree completion, rather than four-year programs; as such, NLU decided not to pursue LIBRAS membership at this time.

In February, Susan Suhayda, Library Director for Northwestern Business College, contacted LIBRAS through the "Contact us" link on the LIBRAS web site. Sharon Nelson reported the request to Ted Schwitzner, along with information on the school's focus as a two-year institution. Ms. Nelson responded with information about our Bylaws noting the requirement that an institution be at least a four-year college or university.

ADVOCACY

LIBRAS was well represented at both the state and national advocacy events in 2005. Both Larry Wild and Ted Schwitzner attended Illinois Library Advocacy Day on April 13, 2005, in Springfield, as did Carolyn Sheehy (North Central College). Attendance in Springfield was down overall from last year, and again, although a few more academic librarians appeared to be present than in previous years. Meetings with legislators or their aides were infrequent this year, as legislators were either in session or in committee meetings.

Wild and Schwitzner also attended National Library Legislative Day, May 4, 2005, in Washington, D.C. Having two LIBRAS members present made it possible for at least one person to meet with staff from all the Congressional districts in the LIBRAS region. Senators, Representatives, and their staff each received information on LIBRAS and on the member libraries in their district, and many staff responded favorably to mention of our colleges and universities. These meetings made many positive impacts, and our presence as academics was again critical as only four academic representatives from Illinois were included in the Illinois delegation.

PUBLIC RELATIONS MATERIALS

In preparation for the Information Literacy program, as well as for future LIBRAS programs and advocacy efforts, promotional materials were selected and imprinted with the LIBRAS logo and tag line, "Academic libraries working together for you." These included notepads and pens purchased from the promotional material company 4imprint.

FAREWELLS

In FY2004-2005, LIBRAS said farewell to three long-time LIBRAS contributors, all from the same library. In July 2004, LIBRAS Archivist left North Park University for a position at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Also leaving North Park this year are retirees and former LIBRAS Presidents, Sonia Bodi and Ann Briody. We wish them all well in their future endeavors, and we look forward to welcoming their successors to the consortium.

FINAL REMARKS

This has been a remarkable year on many different levels. Together, we have discussed and explored many issues of critical interest for our growth as libraries and as an organization. I am indebted to all the Directors, SIG Chairs, and committee members for their dedication to the organization and their will to keep us vibrant and relevant. I hope you all look forward, as I do, to the development of a strategic plan that will lay the groundwork for continued conversation and improvement.

Respectfully submitted,

Ted Schwitzner, President