

LIBRAS Executive Committee and SIG Chairs Meeting
Wednesday, August 19, 2009
Library of Benedictine University

Attendees: Jack Fritts (President), Benedictine; Jennifer Paliatka (Past President), Elmhurst College; Ken Orenic (Vice President/President-Elect), Dominican; Marie Hay (Treasurer), Trinity International; Amy Weidner (Communications Director), Benedictine; April Levy (Secretary), Columbia; Kim Butler (North Central), Archives SIG Chair; Mark Kroll (Benedictine), Technical Services SIG Chair; Carol Warner (Judson), Access Services SIG Chair

The meeting began at 9:15 a.m.

1. Introductions were made, and the minutes from the Transition meeting of July 23 were approved.
2. Planning

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) Planning for Meetings and Events

There are now six SIGs, all with chairs except for the Staff Development SIG. Jack hopes to have a person to chair Staff Development very soon. It is required that SIGs meet once per year, but Jack encouraged the chairs present to consider having at least two meetings per year to increase visibility of the SIG and LIBRAS generally, and to encourage greater participation. The focus this year in LIBRAS is on staff development, and what can be done within LIBRAS, since with the economic situation it is likely that few libraries will be able to send staff members to conferences and trainings at a distance.

Kim reported on the recent meeting of the Archives SIG on August 4. The meeting was held at Wheaton College, where attendees toured Wheaton's archives facility, and then discussed the Archon system. Kim promoted the meeting by going through each LIBRAS library's staff directory to identify people who work with archives to invite, and if she did not find anyone, inviting the Library Director. This method was effective in promoting the meeting to interested parties. Also, attendance was opened to all Chicago-area archivists. The Archives SIG plans to survey its membership as to their interests in digitization, and is planning a program to discuss digitization issues next summer at North Park University. The Archives SIG meets regularly in December, April, and July.

The Circulation/Interlibrary Loan SIG has been reactivated because of high interest. Carol, the Chair, said that the first Circ/ILL SIG meeting would be at her institution, Judson College, so that attendees could tour their new building. They are discussing ideas for programs.

The Reference/Collection Development SIG Chair, Katie Maier-O'Shea, was unable to attend the meeting, but sent program ideas via email. She would like to hold a Fall program, and some ideas she has include: Marketing library services/collections to your institution, Creating a physically appealing, usable space, Doing marketing and creating appealing space during financially tough times.

The Emerging Technologies SIG Co-Chairs were not able to attend the meeting.

The newest SIG is Staff Development, and it does not yet have a Chair.

The Technical Services SIG Chair, Mark, said that the SIG plans to meet near the end of Fall semester, post-Thanksgiving or early December. The program topic will be a discussion of how to catalog, process, handle, etc., electronic books and other e-resources. He also plans to schedule a Spring program and will poll group members for topic suggestions.

Jack asked the SIG Chairs what the Executive Committee can do to help them with SIG work this year. Amy mentioned that all of the electronic lists associated with LIBRAS were reset, so people need to resubscribe to any lists they wish to become part of. Ken asked how SIGs promote their events, and if they use the electronic lists. Kim stated that she did not use the LIBRAS electronic list for the recent Archives SIG event.

Jack said that LIBRAS liaisons are supposed to spread the word about LIBRAS events at their institutions, and that the liaisons are supposed to be someone other than the Library Director. Jack asked the Library Directors to tell him who the liaison was for their library, and many of the directors said that they themselves were the liaison. He thought it was a very good idea for SIG Chairs to identify who at each library might be interested in a SIG, and to then contact them directly to tell them about the SIG, invite them to join the electronic list and provide instructions on how to join it. LIBRAS's focus this year should be on its members, and on staff development in lean economic times. It will be more cost-effective for many libraries to send their staff to local continuing education and staff development programs like those LIBRAS provides.

It was confirmed that an electronic list exists for the Circulation/ILL SIG. Amy will create an electronic list for the new Staff Development SIG. Amy also noted that the list of liaisons does not include many library directors. Marie asked if links to each library's staff directory could be included on the LIBRAS website. It was determined that there currently are links to directories from the library contact information document in PDF, but they might be easier to find if they were directly on the LIBRAS website.

Jennifer created an information sheet for new SIG Chairs based on the questions she received from them while she was LIBRAS President. She circulated copies of the information sheet to all attendees, and a copy of it will be put on the SIG page of the website as well. Jennifer mentioned that many SIG Chairs last year did not know what was permitted in terms of programs, hospitality, etc. She drew much of the information on the sheet from the Officers' Handbook, and added information about hospitality and communicating with the Vice President and Communications Director.

Kim asked if it were required to generate minutes from each SIG program. Jack responded that it is not required, but that he strongly encouraged SIG Chairs to write summaries of their events soon after they took place instead of waiting to summarize everything in the Annual Report. Providing summaries of recent meetings that can be posted to the blog will show that LIBRAS is an active organization and may also promote upcoming events. The summaries do not have to be lengthy. Amy suggested adding the tips about finding interested people to attend SIG programs through library staff directories to the information sheet. Jennifer commented that having the information sheet should stave off a lot of phone calls from SIG Chairs.

Amy asked that SIG Chairs let her know about any upcoming meetings/programs they are planning so that she can promote the events. Mark asked whether SIG Chairs should submit hospitality receipts. This was confirmed. Mark mentioned that in the past he had paid for hospitality out of his own pocket. Marie said that she needs an itemized receipt and a name to put on the reimbursement check. If the hosting institution is able to cover any of the costs, that would also be helpful! Jennifer mentioned that it would be preferable not to spend large sums of money on refreshments. It is possible to split costs between LIBRAS and the hosting institution.

Kim commented that 10 of the 16 attendees at the Archives SIG program went to a pay-your-own-way lunch after the program. This is another cost-saving possibility for SIG events that most people do not seem to mind.

Ken commented that coffee service through his campus' caterer is \$3.50 per person, which is very expensive.

Ken asked if SIG Chairs have had problems finding institutions willing to host events. Mark responded that he has in the past sent out a call for hosts. In the case of his upcoming program, North Central offered to host. Mark added that he tends to want to hold events at centrally-located institutions like North Central, Wheaton, and Elmhurst. The Technical Services SIG has struggled with low attendance during the past couple of years' events.

Ken commented that SIG Chairs should not have to have the burden of hosting a program at their institution as well as planning the program. Jennifer noted that that is stated on the information sheet she created.

Jack said that he plans to contact the Library Directors and invite them to host a LIBRAS event at their institutions. Some of the more distant locations should be included as well as those that are centrally located. Currently, only about 10 of the 17 LIBRAS member libraries are active. Most of the continuing education and professional development money goes to around 6 institutions. Jack said that we must get everyone actively involved in order to be a viable organization.

Jack then stated that the Executive Committee currently includes elected officers and the Communications Director. He would like to expand that list to include SIG Chairs, maybe not for every meeting, but it would be good if SIG Chairs could attend a couple of Executive Committee meetings throughout the year. He asked what everyone thought of the idea. There were no objections. Jack will invite SIG Chairs to some of the Executive Committee meetings.

3. Scheduling Executive Committee Meetings

Executive Committee meetings are usually held once per quarter. There should be one meeting before Christmas. Jack has created a LIBRAS calendar, and would like everyone to send dates for meetings and programs to him and to Amy so that the calendar and website can be populated. The Executive Committee plus SIG Chairs will meet next on Tuesday, December 15, at Benedictine, from 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m., for a holiday lunch and business meeting. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, March 16, at Columbia, beginning at 10:00 a.m., with a pay-your-own-way lunch afterwards. At that meeting, the Executive Committee will discuss the Annual Meeting and elections. If those issues can be resolved, there may not be a need for an additional Executive Committee meeting before the Annual Meeting. Budget planning for the following year could be discussed at a mini-Executive Committee Meeting after one of the Directors meetings. Tentatively, June 15 will be the date for the next year's Transition meeting.

4. Fall Program/Directors' Meeting, Spring Program/Annual Meeting, Spring Directors' Meeting

The Fall Directors' Meeting will need to be scheduled with the Directors' input, and they can be difficult to pin down. The target time period will be late September. Jack will schedule the date. The Executive Committee will attend the meeting also. Last year's program, "LIBRAS 101," was just for Library Directors. People with collective knowledge of LIBRAS gave presentations about its history and mission. Doing the same kind of program for all library staff is one idea for Fall. The Fall program would then need to be on a separate date from the Directors' Meeting. Early October is the target time period. This LIBRAS 101 could also include orientations to the various SIGs. The new Staff Development SIG will be involved in planning and execution of this program.

The Spring Program/Annual Meeting is for everyone. It can include elections, as last year's did. Annual Reports are also presented. Ken suggested that the presenters from National-Louis that did a session about LibGuides at another program be invited to present at the Annual Meeting. The

program also often includes a presentation on research that LIBRAS has funded. Two applications for research funding have been received this year: one from Trinity International proposing to study Technical Services departments at LIBRAS institutions.

Ken created a list of ideas for programming, and circulated copies of the list. A possible program for the Fall Directors' meeting would be Dominican's Library Director, Bella Karr Gerlich, discussing her research developing a scale to assess and quantify the difficulty of reference questions. Jack commented that the Spring Directors' Meeting, traditionally held at Kendall College, will need to take place in late April or early May, because the lunch is prepared by Kendall culinary students as part of their final exam. Jack plans to recommend to the Directors that LIBRAS pay part of the cost of the lunch and ask Directors to pick up the remainder. If approved, this should balance out the spending on hospitality in the budget.

Ken discussed the program idea of scheduling Fall and Spring sharing sessions between 2 or more libraries. Institutions would need to be solicited to host. Ken asked if everyone attending should plan to tour each department in each Library. Jennifer commented that she thought everyone should tour every department, to increase the knowledge sharing. Marie noted that institutions may only send one representative and have him/her report back, so it made sense that everyone should see all departments in the sharing library. Jack mentioned that when he worked in Wisconsin he used to have his staff conduct 3 library site visits in one day, using a school bus to transport everyone to each library. Ken suggested a goal of having one person from each library department attending a sharing session. Jack suggested pairing up or having sets of 3 libraries, and have visiting among those institutions take place during one day. Several institutions are already interested. He will make this an agenda item for the Directors' Meeting and get them to commit. There are many benefits to small groups talking and sharing information, best practices, etc. Jack commented that he liked all of Ken's program ideas. Ken said he was open to additional suggestions. Jack suggested that the Emerging Technologies SIG be tapped to contribute to other meetings besides their own SIG meetings. Jennifer commented that last year the Emerging Technologies SIG did host a big event. Ken said that he attended, and it was well-attended and well-received.

5. Finance Report

Marie reported that all of the ALA reimbursement requests had been turned in, and she would send the final checks out that day. She needs a W-9 form to give to Kendall College in order for them to be able to pay their annual dues. The tax-exemption letter is not sufficient. Jack will complete a W-9 form and send it to Kendall.

Jack brought up the issue that conference funding is supposed to be at the member early bird rate, but that the documentation on the website does not indicate this. Jennifer said that this change would need to be written up as an amendment and put to the Directors for a vote. Marie noted that in each case when funding for ALA was requested this year, she sent confirmations about the amount of money that would be reimbursed. Unfortunately, there was still confusion about the issue. Jennifer said that the message to the Directors about available funding for this year would be sent out by the end of the week. Jack asked that the word "member" be inserted before "early bird rate" in this message, even though the amendment has not yet been put forward. Jennifer agreed to put that language into the message pre-amendment. Jack will bring the issue up at the Fall Directors' Meeting. He also plans to establish a Task Force to review the Bylaws of LIBRAS because this has not been done comprehensively in 7 or 8 years.

Jennifer provided a list of the individuals funded to attend the ALA Annual Conference. Two people requested funding but did not attend, so the money will be put back into this year's budget. The total amount spend on ALA Annual Conference funding was \$2080.00.

6. Other Business

Amy was contacted by someone trying to get a current email address for an Emeritus faculty member at North Central; Kim will check with the Secretary at North Central to confirm the person's email.

Ken contacted the Placement Office at Dominican to arrange for a student intern to reorganize the content of the LIBRAS website. He and Amy will co-supervise the intern. Ken will meet with the student next week to assess her knowledge and skills, and hopes to have the content reorganized by the end of December. Amy stressed that this would not be a redesign of the site, but a reorganization of content only. Ken mentioned creating a wiki for Information Literacy materials.

Another programming idea was to have people discuss different conferences they had attended and what they learned. This would be to help inform people about the different conferences that are of potential interest to librarians, as well as to share knowledge gained through LIBRAS funding. It would be particularly useful in the case of more obscure conferences that would benefit from greater visibility.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
April Levy, Secretary