

Section 8

Academic & Special Library Section

North Dakota Library Association

2008 Annual Report

Introduction

I'm not sure if I appreciate being in "Section 8" of anything. It makes me think that I am either going to be kicked out NDLA because of certain mental infirmities, or that I am going bankrupt. The truth of either of these assertions is not something I care to ponder at this time.

That this is the first time I've actually noticed that our NDLA group is "Section 8" may offer some pointed critique about how many of these reports I've in fact submitted for the 4 previous quarters I've served as Chair of this group. Well, I am finally ready to discharge my duties, which I suppose, of course, makes this report a "Section 8 Discharge."

2007 Meeting & Beyond

At our annual meeting in Jamestown last year, then ASL Chair Donna James asked that I chair that year's meeting instead of her. As Donna was then NDLA President-Elect and had primary responsibilities for conference planning that year, these duties necessarily kept her very much on the go, so we agreed to pass the ASL baton (or chair) a bit early.

At last year's meeting, ACRL ND/MB Chapter President Rhonda Schwartz spoke about membership, and encouraged ASL members to consider joining and participating in this group. I hope that we encouraged more people to be supportive of this group.

Jim Council, then Dean of Libraries at NDSU, gave the group an update on his library's plans to migrate to a new ILS to replace ALEPH. This was done in the form of a statement read by me at the meeting, as Mr. Council was unable to attend. Some discussion followed. Aleph and ODIN activity in general continue to be of interest and concern to ASL members, and we welcomed this information and update.

There was also a general discussion about increasing communication and ASL Section involvement throughout the year, and ways this might be accomplished.

2008 Activities

ASL activities were largely subdued this year. Following some e-mails from Phyllis Bratton, this year's NDLA President-Elect, Conference Chair, and ASL member, I sent out e-mails in the spring (I think) to members asking what programs,

activities, etc., people might wish to see at the conference and possibly sponsor. Several suggestions were offered, and the ASL section was instrumental in getting Jeff Lorton, a regional sales representative for the bibliographical software company RefWorks, to offer a session demonstrating this product to us using databases already available in our state & universities.

Other ideas that came up but did not happen this year were

- Copyright Workshop
ASL-Related issues; perhaps with a speaker from the LC Copyright Office.
- Library Services to Online & Distance Education Students
Perhaps a panel discussion, issues & debate, Q&A, training, etc.
- Presentation to/about Tribal College services.
Content/focus not yet identified, but interest expressed.

Conference Suggestions

ASL members also raised the following issues (or these were raised during our discussions this past year) about what we'd like to see at our annual conference more generally:

- Conference presentations and related material (PowerPoints, website links, pdf's, documents, etc.) available via the conference website, at least to the extent that presenters feel willing to provide it. This can also be done for exhibitors. Especially as this year's conference's theme is "continuing education," it would help us out to have the material available online in case attendees could not make all the meetings they wished due to conflicts or other reasons.
- Better technology support to allow for remote programming (interactive videoconferencing technology for guest speakers that may provide workshops to conference attendees without having to actually travel to our conference. Two guests contacted by ASL this year (Peter M. Vankevich, Head, LC Copyright Information Section & a sales rep for EndNotes software, both suggested that they could easily do an interactive web-based presentation if we had videoconferencing technology available on our end. Having this for future conference and the local support would help us get quality programs at a very reduced (none, sometimes) cost.

Looking Ahead

Member participation is an important issue to focus in the coming year. At the 2008 conference I intend to devote some time to a discussion of what programming we wish to see at our next conference, and, I hope, solicit members to help make these programs happen. Things were done late, or not done at all this year, because of my poor planning & coordinating skills. More can be done, but not just by one person. I suspect that there are many people who have ideas and are willing to

help, but just need to be encouraged, prodded, or threatened. I stand ready to provide this assistance.

This Year's 2008 Business Meeting

An agenda was sent out about a month prior to the conference, and additional suggestions were solicited for discussion topics. On the agenda this year are discussions initiated by Wilbur Stolt about ND statewide databases, a report on the "Go Local North Dakota" database, an update on NDSU's ILS progress by new Library Dean Michele Reid (or representative if she is unable to make it) and other section business and planning.

Victor Lieberman
Chair & Chair-Elect
Academic & Special Library Section (Section 8)