NEW YORK NEW JERSEY CHAPTER, INC. — NY NJ — MEDICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Newsletter
Spring 2002

From the Editors

The spring issue of the **Chapter *Newsletter* is alive with** some refreshing changes and wonderful additions.

George Wahlert, our new *Hospital Library Notes* columnist, brings his unique and earthy perspective to the world of hospital librarianship. **Elaine Wells**, our *Advocacy Committee chair*, sums up recent activities and provides a close and informative look at focus groups. **Maria Astifidis** provides a tempting invitation to dine with friends and colleagues at this year's *Spring Dinner* on April 4, 2002 at the Williams Club.

Our regular columnists continue to contribute interesting and engaging pieces. Read about the notable accomplishments of Chapter members as compiled by **Xiomara Cruz** in our *Kudos* column. **Pat Gallagher** rounds up her picks for the best of the web while **Kathel Dunn** alerts us to what's essential reading in the library and medical literature.

For those needing to get a handle on the molecular revolution in medicine, **Kris Alpi** explains what gene chips are and why they are so important. PDA's are hot, and **Nancy Glassman** our technology columnist, provides an excellent summary of PDA basics, along with bet bets tips. Finally, meet **Richard Faraino** as we shine the spotlight on our **incoming Chapter Chair**.

Please contact us with comments and future contributions via e-mail.

Happy Spring!

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Upcoming Dates to Remember

Dallas, Texas, May 17-23, 2002

NY/NJ Chapter Spring Dinner

The Williams Club

April 4, 2002

Mini Medical School

Fashion Institute of Technology

April 19, 2002

Newsletter
Spring 2002

From the Chair

One of the most enjoyable aspects of being Chair of the Chapter is the opportunity to be in touch with all aspects of Chapter activities and to really know how much is going on for and by members. April is proving to a particularly busy and event-packed month!

- On Thursday, **April 4**, the Chapter will gather for its **annual Spring Dinner**, this year held at the Williams Club. Organized by Maria Astifidis and George Wahlert, we expect a good turnout and relaxing evening in the company of colleagues.

- On Saturday, **April 6**, Ellen Maleszewski will host a table for the Chapter at the **SLA Career Day** to be held at the Lighthouse. The SLA Career Day usually brings about 250 people together to learn about library careers.

- On Friday, **April 19**, the Chapter will host a **Mini-Med School** at the Fashion Institute of Technology with medical faculty from institutions throughout the metropolitan area. The Mini-Med School has also sparked interest from outside the Chapter with other library groups from Long Island and from Rochester hoping to host similar events.

As we move towards May, I am also aware of the quick passing of time. Soon our Nominations Committee will be seeking nominations for officers to serve on next year's Board. And, the Program Committee will be sending out registration information for our **annual meeting on Tuesday, October 15** at the Lighthouse in Manhattan (East 59th Street).

I hope to see many of you at these Chapter events, and at the Medical Library Association meeting in Dallas.

Kathel Dunn, Chair

Editor of this issue:

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Newsletter
Spring 2002

NEW YORK NEW JERSEY CHAPTER, INC. **NJ** MEDICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Join us for the Spring Dinner

by Maria Astifidis
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This year's annual NY/NJ Chapter MLA Spring dinner will be on April 4, 2002 at the Williams Club.

The Williams Club is a private club, located in the elegant historic district of Murray Hill. Housed in a brownstone since 1921 on 39th Street, the Club was organized as a place for Alumni of Williams College to socialize and use as a residence whenever they need to stay in town. It has a warm "clubby" atmosphere and is ideal for a social event such as our Spring dinner. The first floor of the Williams Club is the home to 13 portraits of historic members of the Williams College community.

Food
Executive Chef **Christopher James** will prepare dinner. Your chosen entrée will be delectable, and there will be a cash bar available.

Freebies
Several vendors and members have donated items to be raffled at the dinner, and each guest will receive a souvenir prepared by **George Wahlert**.

Musical Entertainment
Faiona Molliene Milwood, pianist and cellist, will provide musical entertainment. She is a student at New York University, where she will earn her Masters Degree in music therapy in May 2002. Faiona has performed at Carnegie Hall, and has taught music on Long Island. She is currently working in the Music Therapy Department at Beth Israel Medical Center, and plans to use her talents as a musician to help patients with pain management, asthma treatment, and outpatient treatment of chronic illnesses.

Help us welcome in the Spring season on April 4th, 2002. Cocktails will be served from 5:30 - 6:30 PM. Dinner begins at 6:30 PM till about 8:00 PM. The cost is $50.00 per person. It promises to be a charming evening.

For more information, please contact:

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Morgan Library
Long Island College Hospital - S-80
339 Hicks Street
Brooklyn, NY 11201-5525

Please make checks payable to:

NY/NJ Chapter MLA

Newsletter
Spring 2002

Greetings From The Incoming Chair

by Richard L. Faraino
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Dear Colleagues,

As I paused to contemplate on my upcoming term as Chapter Chair, it occurred to me that a good way to begin would be to introduce myself, with all due respects, to the membership.

I currently live in Brooklyn where, with my partner of many years, we are gradually restoring and renovating our house that is also a home to our rambunctious Welsh Terrier, Dino, and is guarded by a pair of cockatiels named Angel and Ariel.

While a student working toward a Master Degree in Information Science at **Pratt Institute**, I joined the Chapter in 1985. In 1988 I was a member of the Continuing Education Committee and then chaired that committee from 1989 to 1990. I served on the Executive Board from 1991 to 1992. During those years I was employed in the libraries of Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, The Medical Library Center of New York, and New York University School of Medicine, where I am today. My positions have all been in various forms of public service.

By the early 1990's, like so many of us, my energies were drawn away from professional librarian activities. My skills, I ventured to believe, were well employed in AIDS activism and research. From the mid-1990s on I became involved with MLA and other professional librarian and medical associations nationally by presenting at annual meetings, participating on committees, the BMLA editorial board, publishing, and became an certified MLA CE instructor and an AHIP.

What about the Chapter? One day during her term as Chair, **Patricia**

Tomasulo called me. Casting her spell, no doubt, she recruited me as the Chapter Liaison for Credentialing (AHIP). Since then I have taken a renewed interest in our local community, The New York/New Jersey Chapter of MLA. Presently, I am the Conference Co-Chair for the five-chapter meeting to be held in October 2003 in Philadelphia.

Our Chapter is our resource. We can continue to support our professional development by becoming involved in chapter activities. We can coordinate programs that enrich and educate our membership through Continuing Education classes and high quality meetings and programs. Certainly we have done so in the past and with your continued involvement and the involvement of those untapped and talented members (I know you are out there!) we can do even more. Because we are New York and New Jersey the accent of our experiences is unique. Through our social activities and communications via this newsletter, our website, listserv and mail we can learn, share, commiserate, relate and enjoy each other. Yet we are still part of the greater organization and I earnestly solicit your involvement, ideas, thoughts, and comments.

Thank you for this honor and challenge. For our Chapter to continue to be a viable forum for our community I need to hear from you. **I encourage you to express to me your wishes and concerns and thoughts for the direction you believe that our Chapter should take.** My email address is listed above. I look forward to hearing from and working with you.

Newsletter
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NEW YORK NEW JERSEY CHAPTER, INC. NJ MEDICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

The Newsletter *is published for the members of the New York-New Jersey Chapter of the Medical Library Association.*

Kudos

A column featuring and honoring our colleagues in the NY/NJ Chapter of MLA!

Compiled by Xiomara Cruz
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New York Medical College

Marie Ascher has been appointed Head of Reference and Information Services. Marie was also recently elected as chair-elect of the Public Health/Health Administration Section (MLA); awarded membership in the Academy of Health Information Professionals (AHIP), and appointed to the Hospital Library Services Program Advisory Council.

Cathy Gastrich was recently appointed the Serials Librarian.

Cheryl Silver has been promoted to Assistant Director, Information Processing department. She has also been awarded membership at the Senior level in the Academy of Health Information Professionals (AHIP).

Weill Cornell Medical College

Kristine M. Alpi has been appointed Lecturer to the Department of Public Health at Weill Medical College of Cornell University.

Posted 4/4/2002

The Newsletter *is published for the members of the New York-New Jersey Chapter of the Medical Library Association.*

Editor of this issue:

Gail Hendler, Ehrman Medical

Web Watch

Pat's Picks

by Patricia E. Gallagher, MLS, AHIP
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Rating System

In our review system, websites are rated by mice, from a half mouse to 5 mice, 5 being the highest rating:

to

This edition will review a variety of resources

1. ## Philip S. Hench Walter Reed Yellow Fever Collection
   http://yellowfever.lib.virginia.edu/

   The **University of Virginia** has mounted this magnificent web site about their Yellow Fever Collection. More than just a list of their own resources, this beautiful web site details as well the people and events that contributed to the **discovery of the cause of Yellow Fever**.

   My rating:
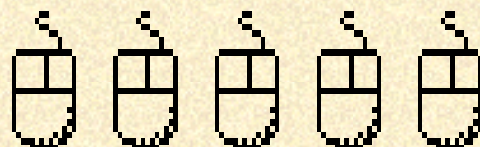
2. New South Wales Multilingual Health Resources

http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/health-public-affairs/mhcs/resources/index.html

From Australia comes a collection of **consumer health pamphlets** on a variety of topics, and available in an amazing array of languages. If you need an article on breast cancer in Turkish (or Spanish or Russian), this is the place to start.

My rating:
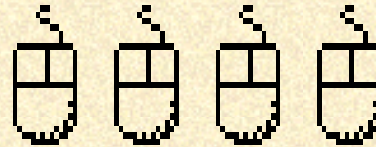
3. New York State Physician Profile

http://www.nydoctorprofile.com/welcome.jsp

If you need **information about a New York State physician**, this site provides some one-stop shopping. The physician's education, affiliations, the type of insurance they take, and legal actions taken against them are all available here. If there is a down side, it is that it is **ONLY** for New York State.

My rating:
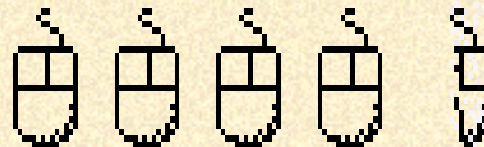
4. New Jersey Medical Society Physician Finder

http://www.msnj.org/pf/index.html

For **information on physicians in New Jersey who are members of the State Medical Society**, this free online database provides access to information on the physician's education, affiliations, and contact information. The database is searchable by name, by hospital affiliation and by speciality. The *downside* is they must be members of the Medical Society, or they are not included.

My rating:

5. **TRIP**

http://www.tripdatabase.com/
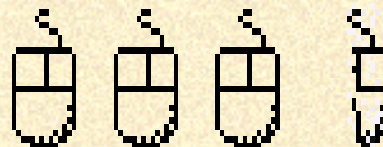
TRIP **searches the title and abstract of 55 publications**, limiting to those it considers the "best evidence". When you need a small set to examine, try this.

My rating:
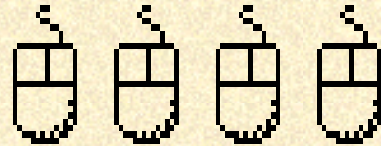
6. *And now for something completely different:*

The Internet Broadway Database

http://www.ibdb.com/

For the patron about to see the revival of *Oklahoma*, and at a loss as to the name of the original Ado Annie (it was **Celeste Holm**), finally an Internet resource is available. Search by play, by cast and crew members, by theatre, even by season.

My rating:

Brave New World

Red Light, Green Light:
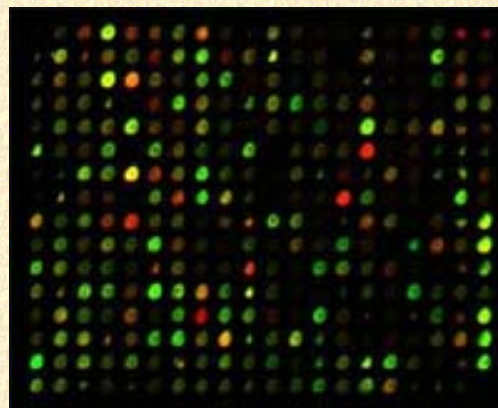
Microarray technology uses color intensities to identify genes and mutations

by Kristine M. Alpi, AHIP
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Microarrays (also known as **DNA chips**) allow researchers to study how large numbers of genes interact with each other. All of the genes in a genome can be arrayed (arranged in an orderly fashion) on a chip no larger than a standard microscope slide. A robot precisely applies tiny droplets containing functional DNA to a slide. **Functional DNA** (also known as *exons*) is DNA that gets translated into proteins. [Next issue, we will go back to the basics of DNA and explain the translation process].

Researchers attach fluorescent labels to DNA from the cell they are studying. The labeled probes are allowed to bind to complementary DNA (cDNA) strands on the slides. This pairing-up process is known as **hybridization probing**. The slides are put into a scanning microscope that can measure the brightness of each fluorescent dot; the brightness reveals how much of a specific DNA fragment is present, an indicator of how active it is. Different color fluorescent labels (red and green) are used to differentiate between multiple cells being studied at the same time. The location and intensity of a color will identify

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whether the gene is present in the samples.

Computers capture this data for later analysis. **Microarray Markup Language**, developed by a working group from the Microarray Gene Expression Database, is a first attempt to provide a standard for submitting and analyzing the enormous amounts of microarray expression data generated by different laboratories around the world. A range of clinical applications has been suggested for DNA microarrays, including expression profiling for improved disease classification, genotyping of polymorphisms affecting disease susceptibility, identification of genetic lesions within malignancies, and design and discovery of therapeutics. See the Diehn et al. article for more detail.

Resources [in order of complexity]

- *Microarray technology* [definition, spoken explanation and illustration]. **NGHRI Glossary of Genetic Terms.** [Online]. Available: http://www.nhgri.nih.gov/DIR/VIP/Glossary/ pub_glossary.cgi?key=microarray%20technology&view_value_pair=on

- **National Center for Biotechnology Information.** 2001. Microarrays: Chipping away at the Mysteries of Science and Medicine. Just the Facts: A Basic Introduction to the Science Underlying NCBI Resources. [Online]. Available: http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/About/primer/microarrays.html

- Diehn M, Ash AA, Brown PO. 2000. Examining the Living Genome in Health and Disease with DNA Microarrays. *MSJAMA*, 3 May, 283: 229-2299. [Online]. Available: http://www.ama-assn.org/sci-pubs/msjama/articles/vol_283/no_5/jms00017.htm

In The Literature

by Kathel Dunn, MSLS
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This issue of *In the Literature* **first revisits the world of eBooks. The Hane articles look at the rising costs and questionable use of eBooks in libraries, and discusses future directions for eBook library publishing; Claessens takes an in-depth look at various web security issues that uncover some suprising information for surfers. Finally, a summary of the March 9, 2002 issue of BMJ, which is devoted to consumer health informatics, focuses on the Gagliardi study that rated the instruments used to measure the quality of web-based consumer health information.**

Hane, Paula J. ebrary launches ebrarian 2.0, announces new publisher partners. *Information today* March 2002;19(3):46.
And
Hane, Paula J. OCLC completes netLibrary acquisition, raises eBook fees. *Information today* March 2002;19(3):17-18.

Since the Fall 2001 *In the Literature* column reviewed the article on eBooks (O'Leary, Mick. New academic information model bypasses libraries. *Online* July/August 2001; 25(4):72.), a number of changes have taken place and are worth a revisit to the eBook world. Paula J. Hane, the *Information today* **NewsBreaks** editor, reports that **netLibrary** declared bankruptcy in November 2001 and subsequently was purchased by OCLC. netLibrary offers eBooks to libraries. In re-examining its business model, it will raise the eBook prices "to cover costs to hosts, serve, and maintain ... collections." The article mentions

discussion on the **Digital Reference Services** listserv in which librarians noted low usage of eBooks in general. The experience at the **University of Texas at Austin** was markedly different, with as many as 1,800 e-titles circulating in one 2-week period. Dennis Dillon, a librarian at UT Austin, attributed the eBooks acceptance and use to the placement of MARC records of the eBooks in the library catalog.

ebrary, a company that had not previously marketed to libraries, announced that it was launching *ebrarian*, with some initial library customers. ebrarian is much more tailored to libraries: its content can now be accessed through library catalogs providing full MARC records, which allows the materials to flow more smoothly through library processes from acquisitions to cataloging to public services points. ebrary currently has approximately 5,000 titles and is partnering with McGraw-Hill Companies, Random House, Penguin Classics, Taylor & Francis, Yale University Press, John Wiley & Sons, Greenwood, Harvard University Press, Cornell University Press and Indiana University Press.

Claessens J, Preneel B, Vandewalle J. A tangled world wide web of security issues. *First Monday* 2002; 7(3). http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue7_3/claessens/index.html

Claessens et al provide an updated review of security issues on the Web. They discuss **security issues on multiple levels**: communications, user authentication, mobile code, anonymity and privacy, content, payment, implementation, operating systems, users and legal. On the communication level, the authors describe the **SSL/TLS protocol (Secure Sockets Layer)/IETF Transport Layer Security Group**: "SSL/TLS provides entity authentication, data authentication, and data confidentiality. In short, SSL/TLS works as follows. A connection between a browser and a Web server is divided into two phases, the handshake and the data transfer. The purpose of the handshake is threefold: the Web browser and server need to agree on a set of cryptographic algorithms (ciphersuites) that will be used to protect the data, to authenticate each other, and to agree on cryptographic keys; secondly, they need to establish this set of cryptographic keys with which data will be protected; and lastly, the Web server authenticates to the browser and, optionally, the user/browser authenticates to the server." The authors also comment on the lack of visual confirmation for users of the level of security on a web site (the little lock being an example of such a visual clue). Issues of trust (for users) and the ability to protect user privacy are ongoing issues. Not surprisingly, the authors conclude that "the user might often be the weakest link in the system."

BMJ. March 9, 2002. 324(7337).

The March 9, 2002 issue of BMJ is devoted to a discussion of health information on the Internet. While the whole issue is worth reading for librarians (and others) this summary will look at one article: **Gagliardi A, Jadad AR.** Examination of instruments used to rate quality of health information on the internet: chronicle of a voyage with an unclear destination. 569-572. This paper is an update of the authors' 1998 JAMA study (**Jadad AR, Gagliardi A.** Rating health information on the internet: navigating to knowledge or to Babel? *JAMA* 1998;279:611-4.)

They identified 98 **health information rating/ranking instruments** through a series of searches and eliminated those that did not provide information by which they in turn could be evaluated. Of the 98 identified sites, only 11 contained **information on their rating criteria**. Only three sites indicated authorship, attribution and disclosure (ownership, financial, etc): the American Medical Association (http://ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category1/3952.html), Health on the Net Foundation (http://www.hon.ch/HONcode/Conduct.html) and Health Improvement Institute Aesculapius award for rating sites (http://hii.org).

The authors mention that many rating sites appear and disappear with a certain rapidity - longevity not yet being a Web strong suit. They discuss new initiatives for certifying the validity of web site information including a European project that suggests an accreditation model.

Technology Review

The Future Is in the Palm of Your Hand

by Nancy Glassman, MLS, AHIP
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You see them everywhere. These little, hand-held devices are starting to surpass cell phone and laptop use on buses, on trains, at airports, at Starbucks, and even in libraries.

What are these things? What can they do? Are they more than just an expensive toy?

They are **personal digital assistants** -- more commonly known as **PDAs**, or handhelds - small, hand-held, pocket-sized computers. PDAs can perform a wide variety of functions. They have commonly been used as organizers for scheduling, storing addresses and telephone numbers. They can also be used for word processing, spreadsheets, email, web access, and as reference and clinical research tools. PDAs can be synchronized or "synced" with personal computers, Macintoshes, or servers via a hardware device called a cradle, or via infrared transfer, also known as "beaming" to upload or download information. Data can also be beamed from one PDA to another.

The two most commonly used **PDA operating systems** right now are the *Palm OS* and Microsoft's *Windows CE*, a scaled-down version of the Windows operating system. Manufacturers including Palm, Handspring, and Sony Electronics use the Palm OS. Microsoft Pocket PC, Casio, and Hewlett-Packard use Windows CE. There are a few Linux-based PDAs, but they are a small minority.

PDAs use **touchscreen technology** to input data. Users interact with the PDA by writing or tapping on the touchscreen with a **stylus**. The stylus is used to tap icons on the screen, or for writing on the screen using a handwriting recognition software, such as Graffiti. Most Palm OS products use grayscale displays. Many Pocket PCs have color screens. Color screens shorten battery life.

Memory is an important consideration when selecting a PDA. The Microsoft CE uses more memory than the Palm OS because of the color display and other multimedia features.

PDAs contain expansion slots that let the user **add peripherals**, such as mini keyboards, modems, and extra memory.

Wireless technology is expanding the possibilities for PDAs. There are wireless PDAs that conform to the **IEEE 802.11** standard. Wireless access availabilty depends on your geographic location (since it is not yet available everywhere), and your Internet Service Provider. The Kyocera Smart-phone is a Palm-based cell-phone-plus-PDA that is built for wireless web browsing and e-mail. Cell phone connections can be problematic for people who work in hospital settings where cell phones are not allowed.

Where there is connectivity to the internet, there is the possibility for **viruses**. In the past few years, viruses have infected some Palm devices. **Trend Micro** provides a free program, *PC-cillin for Wireless*, which deactivates viruses that infect PDAs based on the Palm OS, and Windows CE. McAfee and Symantec also sell anti-virus software for Palm OS and Windows CE. Many PDAs come with **password protection options**.

There are many **medical and health care applications** now available for PDAs. They include e-books, dictionaries, student guides, prescribing, patient tracking, and calculators. Database providers such as **Ovid** have gotten into the PDA game with *Ovid@Hand* (http://www.ovid.com/products/hand/index.cfm). Some resources, such as *Epocrates* (http://www.epocrates.com), are free. Others can be quite costly. A list of health sciences related PDA webliographies is a the end of this article.

Russell Smith's brief communication, "Adapting a new technology to the academic medical library: personal digital assistants," *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, 90(1), January 2002, 93-94, describes how the **Norris Medical Library** at the University of Southern California has used this new technology to increase its visibility to the University community. The Norris Library website contains lists of applications, resources and tips useful to the medical community:

http://www.usc.edu/hsc/nml/lis/tutorials/pdas.html.

Mari Stoddard's article, "Handhelds in the health sciences library," *Medical reference services quarterly*, 20(3), Fall 2001, 75-82, is an overview of the PDA experience at the **Arizona Health Sciences Library**. AHSL has very detailed and thorough coverage of general and health sciences-related PDA resources on their website, http://educ.ahsl.arizona.edu/pda/hlth.htm.

MLA held a Satellite Teleconference, *Sync or Swim: Managing the Flood of PDAs in Health Care* on February 6, 2002. Information on the teleconference and information on ordering the video is available at http://www.mlanet.org/education/telecon/pda/index.html.

If you do not already have a PDA of your own and would like to see what your library's website would look like on a PDA, you can **download a Palm OS emulator** from the Palm website at http://www.palmos.com/dev/tools/emulator/.

Here are some resources for PDAs:

Hardware:

- **Casio:** http://www.casio.com/personalpcs/
- **Handspring:** http://www.handspring.com
- **Hewlett-Packard:** http://hp-at-home.com/gatewayPages/handhelds.htm
- **Kyocera:** http://www.kyocera-wireless.com/kysmart/
- **Microsoft Pocket PC:** http://www.microsoft.com/mobile/pocketpc/
- **Palm:** http://www.palm.com
- **Sony Electronics:** http://www.sonystyle.com/micros/clie/

Software:

- **Adobe Acrobat Reader for PDAs:** http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/acrrmobiledevices.html
- **Handango for Pocket PC and Palm OS:** http://www.handango.com/
- **Tucows PDA site for Pocket PC and Palm OS:** http://www.tucows.com/localpda.html

PDA Web Applications:

- **AvantGo:** https://avantgo.com

Extensive lists of **Medicine & Health Care information** for PDAs have been compiled by many libraries. Here are a few useful resources:

- **Stanford University:** http://palm.stanford.edu/quicksoftware.html
- **Arizona Health Sciences Library:** http://educ.ahsl.arizona.edu/pda/hlth.htm#g
- **University of Southern California:** http://www.usc.edu/hsc/nml/lis/tutorials/pdaresources.html

Antivirus Software for PDAs:

- **Trend Micro:** http://www.antivirus.com
- **McAfee:** http://www.mcafee.com
- **Symantec:** http://www.symantec.com

General websites customized for PDA Users:

- **AvantGo:** https://avantgo.com
- **Handango:** http://www.handango.com/
- **Yahoo:** http://mobile.yahoo.com/
- Also, many airlines are now offering flight information for PDA users. As an example, check out **Northwest Airlines:** http://www.nwa.com/services/handheld/.

PDA-related Listservs:

- **MLA has a new PDA Discussion list**. To subscribe to the list, send an e-mail message to majordomo@mlahq.org. (This address can also be used to send commands to Majordomo.) Type the message **subscribe mla-pda** (This will command Majordomo to subscribe the sender to the e-mail discussion list.) Leave the subject line blank. For more information, see http://www.mlanet.org/education/telecon/pda/pdadiscuss.html.

- **LibWireless** is a discussion list regarding all things wireless, including but not limited to PDAs. It is moderated by Wilfred (Bill) Drew at SUNY Morrisville College Library. To subscribe, send a blank message to libwireless-subscribe@ls.suny.edu.

NEW YORK NEW JERSEY CHAPTER, INC. | NY | MEDICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Online Newsletter Index

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Hospital Library Notes

Spoon-feeding the Masses - Dishing It Out à la Librarian

by George A. Wahlert, MSLS, AHIP
Director, Morgan Health Sciences Library
Long Island College Hospital

While in graduate school (Hello Pratt alumni!), I found my professional niche in the multi-faceted world of medical librarianship. Back then, I became wedded to a very keen interest in traditional reference services (of the old pre-Internet type). So, three months after receiving my MSLS, I left a one-person pharmaceutical advertising agency to begin my life as the reference librarian at **Long Island College Hospital**.

Ahhh, I longingly recall **spoon-feeding customers** in the good old days. I'm talking about the glory times, my friends, when you ran about 10 searches a day, and yet, part of that job was to show library patrons how to use a printed index. Remember those? Oh, how I loved to watch people line up to do a search. Then, as each satisfied customer left my workspace, I would gleefully shout "next" to help another searcher find that elusive reference. I have always felt that libraries are a service-based industry. And, spoon-feeding is the personal and prized touch we medical librarians add to an expanding list of jobs that were never taught in Library School.

A library mentor and sage once related his theory about **two schools of library thought - theory and practice**. *The theorist studies a book; the practitioner studies how to use a book.* The mentor related an example of how his theory manifests itself at the reference desk. If a "customer" asked for a certain book, the theorist would say, "WG 315, go down three aisles and make a left". The practitioner would unchain him or herself from the reference desk and take the person to the shelf to actually locate the item.

Now, as a library manager and a captive jack of all library trades, I still spoon-feed library users. Sometimes, I have to take them by the hand to show them where a journal or book is, or how to read a citation, or how to use the photocopier or an electronic stapler. Other times, I have to explain and repeat . . . and repeat . . . and repeat our library's policies and procedures. Still in all, I really enjoy doing computer searches, and I always manage to look over the shoulder of my end users to ensure that their informational needs are met. A warm body (also known as the masses) is welcomed in my library, and is not counted as just another gate statistic. I'm open and willing to provide what I would call "library services à la book cart".

Why is it that we, the library professionals and administrators, have to sometimes spoon-feed the masses? There are many causes of user codependency and one of the reasons will be discussed in my next column *"Living in the Land of Cultural Diversity"*. Right now, several reasons make our patrons reliant on us in ways we never expected them to be: the "dumbing of America"; social status; and duh(!) human nature, all contribute to the need for spoonfeeding. After having said that, I should put myself on the other side of the reference desk and put away my librarian-colored glasses . . .

I have always supported **library and librarian value-added service**. But, lately I feel that I am being ambushed for non-traditional library services by a group of library (ab)users. Here are four true "spoon-feeding du jour" vignettes:

- A **gastroenterology fellow** asked me to select a subject for him to discuss at a noontime conference, but he proudly stated that he would run the search himself. I guess he doesn't have the "guts" to find something of interest to talk about.
- A **resident** came to the library with a stack of hospital letterhead and a disk, and asked me to word-process six copies of each of her seven letters of recommendation. I proclaimed that I am a healthcare professional, and not a word processor.
- A **porter** asked me to help his parents fill out their immigration papers. I used the phone directory to help him to contact human resources.
- A **nursing student** asked me to proofread her mid-year report. With blue pencil in hand, I did it during my lunch hour.

The above are examples of non-traditional library service. With a staff of only 1.3 FTE, it can be very, very difficult to assist library patrons with all of the traditional library services and spoon-feed them, too. How do YOU manage to serve all kinds of needs all at once? Sometimes, I fantasize installing a "take a number" machine in the library as I dish out my information specials. I think we are all grappling with catering to an increasing demand for traditional and non-tradtional services while we struggle with diminishing resources and budgets. How do we continue to

serve and spoon-feed our patrons with that special medical librarian touch, but still retain the magic feeling of shouting out **_"NEXT!"_**

New York New Jersey Chapter, Inc. Medical Library Association

Newsletter
Spring 2002

Online Newsletter Index

RML Update

by Joanne Jahr, MLS
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It's been a fairly busy month or two with a number of additions and changes to the RML staff and to the library staff of the **New York Academy of Medicine**.

First, the **RML has a new director**. Of course, **Mary Mylenki** is still Associate Director, but the New York Academy of Medicine has appointed **Maxine L. Rockoff, Ph.D., as Director of the Division of Information Management** with overall responsibility for the Academy's Library, Department of Information Systems, Historical Programs, and the Regional Medical Library.

Dr. Rockoff has a broad and varied background with **extensive experience in information technology**. Of particular relevance for the RML, she is particularly interested in the potential for **distance learning**. Dr. Rockoff has worked with settlement houses and other urban institutions, as well as on projects related to rural and inner-city health initiatives, and has published a number of papers on these subjects.

We are delighted to have her with us and hope that those of you who haven't yet will soon have the opportunity to meet her in person.

Second, we were all sorry when **Erica Burnham** tendered her resignation as Consumer Health Information Coordinator in order to return to Canada to become Head Librarian at the Macdonald Campus Library at McGill University. She was a good colleague and fun to work with. Erica brought a true sense of professionalism and dedication to her work, which was clearly seen in her work in Region 1 and in her work with the Consumer and Patient Health Information Section (CaPHIS) of the Medical Library Association. However, in nearly the same breath, we are delighted to announce that taking her place is **Rhonda Allard**, and we hope you will all join us in welcoming Rhonda to New York.

Before relocating to the New York metropolitan area, Rhonda was at the National Library of Medicine for several years, and some of you may remember meeting her at NLM's exhibits at MLA meetings. Rhonda has extensive experience in developing training materials and providing training in various NLM programs such as Grateful Med and PubMed. We are looking forward to working with her as the NN/LM consumer health information services continue to expand and hope you will soon have an opportunity to meet her at various sites throughout our region.

Rhonda can be reached via e-mail at rallard@nyam.org and by telephone at 212-822-7353.

Finally, perhaps tangential to the day-to-day workings of the RML but of importance to the lifeblood of the Academy, as of this summer there will be two new staff members in the library: **Christian Warren**, Ph.D., has accepted the position of *Academy Historian* as of June, and **Janice Kaplan** will be joining us as the *Academy Librarian* in August.

NEW YORK NEW JERSEY CHAPTER, INC. **NY NJ** MEDICAL LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

Advocacy Committee Report

*by Elaine Wells, Chair,
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Patriot Legislation

On October 11, the Senate passed S. 1510, also known as the **Anti-Terrorist Act of 2001**. The final vote was 96 to 1 with only Senator Russ Feingold (D-WI) voting against the bill.

Despite the best efforts of the library community, "problematic privacy provisions" regarding library records, patron privacy and computer trespassing were retained in the final legislation, according to an article on the **American Library Association** web site. For more detailed information, log onto www.ala.org/washoff/patriot.html.

UCITA

The **Uniform Computer Information Transactions Act (UCITA)** is a contract law designed to standardize the licensing of software and all other forms of digital information. It would adversely affect libraries, schools, universities, and individual consumers of software. Thus far, only two states (Maryland and Virginia) have adopted the law, but other state legislatures are considering it.

Copyright

In the case of **Tasini vs. the New York Times**, it was decided that freelance writers own the rights to what they produce and their works cannot be reproduced without their permission. Publishers have, therefore, pulled freelancers' contributions from the material they provide to databases. Libraries, and the scholars and students who use them, risk losing access to complete archives. Copyright, of course, remains an area to watch.

Annual National Library Legislative Day

The 28th Annual National Library Legislation Day will be held May 6th and 7th, 2002. The coordinators for New York State are **Mary Rinato Berman**, Deputy Director of the Westchester Library System, who can be reached at 914-674-3600; and **Robert Bellinger**, Associate Director for the Staten Island branches of the New York Public Library, at 718-720-5766. Although public librarians outnumber medical librarians by a wide margin at this event, the legislative packets provide a wealth of information on issues worth watching.

For more information on legislative issues affecting libraries, check out the **Medical Library Association** *web site at* www.mlanet.org.

Thanks to Committee Member **Tom Angelo** for providing updates for inclusion in this newsletter.

Newsletter
Spring 2002

What Do You Want From Us?

Library assessment by focus groups: Adapting this staple of the marketing world to an academic health/sciences setting

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Everybody has an opinion. Those of us who serve the public can pretty much count on that, as well as the fact that they will state those opinions most vociferously when they are dissatisfied. *A focus group can harness those ideas, stimulate service development, and make our patrons (in this context, our customers) feel valued.* It can also lend much needed support and organizational "buy-in" to the decisions we as librarians make. Adapting the generic focus group concept, which is easily researched in books and articles, is essential to tailoring the process for your individual institution. Here's a look at how we are doing it at SUNY Optometry.

Why did we decide to do it?
Like most institutions, SUNY Optometry has a veritable plethora of electronic journals to offer. Some customers want them all listed on a single page on our web site. Some would like them grouped alphabetically. Others would like them arranged by subject. Still others would like to link to them directly from **PubMed** (still a pipe dream until more journal providers participate in **LinkOut**.) Most alarmingly, some remain confused as to what is available and unaware of just how much they can access from their desktops. We decided that some consensus

development was in order, and that a focus group may be the way to reach it.

How *will* we do it?
Notice the future tense . . . we haven't done it yet. But here is the plan: **Recruit participants.** We will make our groups interdisciplinary, combining clinicians, didactic faculty, researchers, and students. We will make sure that there is broad representation from as many departments as possible (e.g. primary care, ocular disease, low vision, learning disabilities, etc.) avoiding "friendship groups" whenever possible. We will also try to ensure that the individuals we choose are reasonably heavy users of our library services. Because there is only one hour of freedom that everyone has in common (noon to 1PM) we will offer lunch as an incentive. The Library Director, traditionally unbiased and hopefully knowledgeable about electronic journal delivery options, will moderate.

How is the Academic Focus Group different from the generic focus group?
Individuals in an academic setting are used to the **peer review tradition** and are comfortable with an **open analytic process**. They also support the rigorous examination and open discussion of results. The focus group, therefore, becomes a sort of "peer review" of potential electronic journal delivery options. Like the peer review process, it will ultimately lend an air of authority to the decisions we make about electronic resource delivery.

So the next time someone offers an opinion, they will know we are listening.

Many thanks to SUNY Optometry Assistant Librarian
Kadri Niider *for her in-depth research on focus groups.*