

Meeting Notes

Spring 2009 Membership Meeting

April 30 – May 1, 2009

Tidewater A, Sadler Center

College of William and Mary

Williamsburg, Virginia

Participants

Air University: Martha Stewart

ASERL: John Burger

Auburn University: Bonnie MacEwan

Clemson University: Jens Holley

College of William & Mary: Connie
McCarthy

Council on Library & Information

Resources: Chuck Henry (*guest speaker*)

Duke University: Robert Byrd (*guest
speaker*)

Duke University: Deborah Jakubs

East Carolina University: Larry Boyer

Emory University: Margaret Ellingson

Florida State University: Julia Zimmerman

George Mason University: John Zenelis

Georgia Institute of Technology: Tyler
Walters

Georgia State University: Nan Seamans

Lyrasis: Kate Nevins (*guest speaker*)

Lyrasis: Catherine Wilt (*guest speaker*)

Mississippi State Univ: Frances Coleman

Tulane: Lance Query

UAB: Jerry Stephens

University of Alabama: Gary Wasdin

University of Central Florida: Barry Baker

University of Florida: Judith Russell

University of Georgia: William Potter

University of Memphis: Sylverna Ford

University of Miami: William Walker

University of Mississippi: Julia Rholes

University of South Carolina: Tom McNally

University of South Florida: William
Garrison

University of Tennessee: Barbara Dewey

University of Virginia: Carol Hunter

Vanderbilt University: Flo Wilson

Virginia Commonwealth University: John
Ulmschneider

Virginia Tech: Eileen Hitchingham

Wake Forest University: Lynn Sutton

April 30, 2009

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by ASERL President Bonnie MacEwan at 1:00 p.m.

ASERL 2009 Annual Meeting

After welcome and introductions, Bonnie opened the Annual Business Meeting. The agenda included:

Board Elections. A nominating committee comprised of Catherine Murray-Rust (Georgia Tech), Bill Walker (U-Miami), and Eileen Hitchingham (Virginia Tech) offered the following slate: John Ulmschneider (VCU), President Elect; and Nan Seamans (GSU) and Jeff Luzius (Air Univ) as members at-large. Jerry Stephens (UAB) moved to accept the slate, and it was approved unanimously by the group.

Financial Report. Julia Zimmerman presented the ASERL Financial Summary. ASERL's bank balance as of March 30, 2009 is \$80,658.21. ASERL is expecting operating costs to break even

with revenue during the next year. The Board has re-authorized the Finance Committee to assess the organization's long-term financial needs.

The Annual Meeting was adjourned at 1:15. President MacEwan then convened the Spring 2009 Membership Meeting.

ASERL Spring 2009 Membership Meeting

Budget discussion

John Burger provided handouts that document the recent survey of ASERL member library budgets. A pie chart showing percentage budget increases anticipated by members showed that the largest group of members expects a reduction of up to 3%. Next year, about a third of members anticipate flat budgets.

A discussion followed on about how libraries were implementing cuts. Eliminating positions by attrition and reducing the materials budget were common approaches. A number of directors emphasized the importance of frequent and open communication with staff and constituents, and a variety of mechanisms were discussed.

Connie McCarthy (W&M) has received major gifts, which have softened the blow. Others discussed reorganizations to make better use of staff and elimination or downsizing of branch libraries.

Lance Query (Tulane) described some of the strategies used to deal with the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, which are applicable to conditions faced by multiple libraries in the current economic downturn.

Lyrasis Report

The merger of SOLINET and PALINET was effective on April 1, 2009. Kate Nevins, now CEO of Lyrasis, introduced Cathy Wilt, who is now President of Lyrasis. They are focusing on innovation and new program development, and provided an overview of Lyrasis activities. The new organization pursuing a broad list of projects to benefit members, including providing innovative technology and participating in open source development. They will expand purchasing power by agreements with vendor partners and will capitalize on the power of scale and critical mass. They are pursuing cost control through operational consolidation.

Kate mentioned that there are newly available products, and suggested that ASERL directors encourage collection development officers to look at available resource discounts.

Cathy Wilt talked about the Library Leadership Network, originally developed by PALINET. The program launched an online portal in 2008 for resources for library leaders and emerging leaders. It has received over 50,000 hits per month. Laura Crook is the new manager of the Library Leadership Network.

Cathy Wilt also discussed a mass digitization collaborative, funded with a grant from the Sloan Foundation. The program uses the scanning centers established by the Internet Archive to facilitate scanning of large collections. It will include high quality digitization for fragile and

oversized works, as well as video and audio. Grant monies subsidize part of the scanning costs; the more you digitize the higher the subsidy. There will be a webinar on mass digitization for ASERL libraries on May 27.

Lyrasis also provides training for open source systems, including Evergreen and VuFind. Other library needs on their radar screen are cooperative collection development, digital asset management, scan and print on demand, remote storage, and library assessment.

Also mentioned was "Thought Leadership," a library futures conference, for high-level, concentrated looks at our profession.

Lyrasis will launch a strategic planning process this summer. Also, NELINET is considering joining Lyrasis.

There was a question about OCLC: whether and how it will rebuild the distributor partnership. As of July 1, all libraries will retain the same price relative to usage, and the networks will no longer surcharge. As a result most libraries in region will see a price decrease. OCLC is increasing interaction with member libraries about their services, and seeks to be in direct contract with all members in two years.

Lyrasis can no longer issue sole-source letters for state universities; this may be a problem for some. Instead, they will issue "sourcing" letters, which have worked for most universities.

Strategic Directions for the Council on Library and Information Resources

Chuck Henry talked about some of CLIR's important initiatives, starting with leadership. CLIR's support of the Frye Institute helps build leaders in the academic libraries and IT. CLIR also facilitates a program in which people with PhDs in other fields do post-doc internships in academic libraries.

A hidden collections grant program, funded by the Mellon Foundation, generated 130 proposals last year, 15 of which were funded. Another round is underway with proposals due by June 15th.

The Digital Library Foundation (DLF) has been reincorporated into CLIR. Dues have been eliminated and the programs opened up to all CLIR members.

Asked what libraries get for their investment in CLIR, Chuck said this is being worked on. They will continue the semi-annual forum, which CLIR hopes to make more strategic. A forum was held recently at Emory on digital humanities. CLIR is also looking at interdisciplinary topics, and other interesting symposia/workshops on topics like Medieval parchment and issues that span multiple disciplines; asking questions that haven't been asked before and determining what they require in terms of resources and how libraries fit into the picture.

Two publications are coming out this Fall. One, which will be of broad interest, is a rigorous analysis of the cost differential between the analog library and the digital library. Paul Courant (U. of Michigan) and his students have written the report. A second report is on the feasibility

of an all-digital research library, written at the request of the President of the Asian University of Women (Bangladesh), to determine whether they can get by with digital resources only.

CLIR is also working with a subset of ARL libraries on deep collaboration, termed “radical co-dependency.” This project explores whether we can cooperate in areas where we haven’t done so before: can we share IT? Collections? Can we get rid of physical collections and re-use space for other services and functions? How can we build communities of interdependency and trust around these issues?

Another CLIR project involves working with spy agencies. Digital research in the humanities includes a complexity of scale that’s interesting to engineers and scientists, and this project seeks to tap intelligence-gathering agencies’ strategies to improve our information gathering capabilities. CLIR will begin doing research with some of these agencies to discover what tools are available, and test them. A lot of staff at CIA and other intelligence agencies are humanists, and understand political hierarchy; the government is investing in a more humanistic approach to spying, using large-scale text analysis, etc. CLIR will explore the potential by bringing together selected groups of humanities scholars and intelligence professionals.

A question was asked about how open the DLF forums will be, and whether meeting topics will be operational or more strategic? Chuck answered a Steering Committee will address various DLF-related issues. Forums should be flexible; technical presentations will continue but include new tracks too. The intention is to anchor events in a more national dialog. It has fallen to the Council to figure out how to add value to DLF and make it less of an exclusive club.

Strategic Priorities within ASERL libraries

John Burger facilitated this discussion, which was based on responses to a survey of members on their strategic priorities during a time of economic retrenchment. Handouts summarize member interest: Digitization, facility improvements, and faculty outreach were among the answers most frequently given.

How can ASERL support these priorities? The following were suggested:

- Support 21st century user-oriented services
- Facilitate better assessment tools/activities, in addition to LibQual+
- Leverage partnerships whenever possible
- Help member libraries do something “radical”
- Continue to expand resource sharing activities
- Value of ASERL is pragmatic, in the trenches

The meeting was recessed at 4:02p.m. Members’ reception hosted by Connie McCarthy.

May 1, 2009

The group re-convened at 8:30 a.m.

Report back from Resource Sharing Summit – J. Burger

There is interest in documenting/implementing best practices to ensure optimal workflow within resource sharing at member libraries. John also discussed the need for better tools for decision-making for resource sharing – to facilitate borrowing, purchase on demand, etc. as needed.

Several libraries indicated readiness to join RAPID within the next 60 days. Others are waiting for response from the SECAC provosts to determine if the provosts will fund the implementation of RAPID at those libraries.

John will seek reduced ILL subscription fees from OCLC for libraries that implement RAPID.

Education Committee Update - Julia Rholes

Julia referred the group to a proposal, included in the packet, to seek funding for a program to better train liaison librarians. The proposal requests funds to develop a professional development program for librarians currently working in liaison roles. The program would encourage ongoing, non-episodic training of liaison librarians. The project would run for two years, overseen by a committee appointed by the ASERL Board. The committee would plan an opening symposium, would meet by videoconference to develop the curriculum, do pilot testing and assess the success of the project. George Mason University initiated this idea and has asked for ASERL participation. The deliverables would include curriculum materials and a website, etc. If membership approves, ASERL will appoint a proposal committee that will pursue grant funding for the project.

The proposal was approved by a show of hands. John will work with the Lyris Development Officer to seek grant funding opportunities.

The Education Committee is considering another project which has been looked at but is not ready to launch. This project would sponsor site visits by an HBCU dean, an ASERL dean, and a new librarian, to schools outside the southeast with library science programs. The team would talk to MLIS students to increase awareness of employment opportunities at HBCU schools and within the ASERL community. Grant funding could be considered for this project as well.

Project Update: Civil War Collaborative Digitization

The Collaborative Digitization project team has begun working. About half of ASERL libraries have responded to the survey. John encouraged all others to respond ASAP.

IT/Digital Interest Group

At the Fall 2008 meeting, ASERL members approved formation of an IT/Digital Initiatives Interest Group (ITDIIG), designed to get staff with similar roles together to share information/best practices about a number of areas related to digital project development at

member libraries. One person from each ASERL campus should be the point of contact to ITDIIG. John provided an overview of the group's activities and an initial roster of participants; directors should verify the nominee is correct person from their library.

Project Update: OLE

Deborah Jakubs reported on progress of the OLE project to produce a scalable, interoperable, open source ILS for academic libraries. A planning group is at work with members from several ASERL institutions. Twelve regional workshops have drawn 375 participants. More national/international workshops and presentations are planned.

A scope document has been completed, and an initial design document is expected in June 2009, with a final design document to be finished in July. Software development will begin in Fall/Winter 2009. Five to seven partners for the development phase are being sought; partnership represents a significant investment, including financial commitment and part of a staff member. The Mellon Foundation is covering about half the costs. Can ASERL be a build partner, and spread the costs across member libraries?

Discussion: Shared Storage Options

Shared storage is a longtime ASERL interest. The project championed by Vanderbilt former director Paul Gherman proposed use of existing storage facilities as "banks" of materials to be stored long-term. Other libraries could weed circulating collections as desired, relying on the "bank" of stored collections for access. The original project covered monographs only; today there is increased interest in sharing stored copies of serials.

The original idea was to implement a regional system on this concept. The concept led to a national planning effort, then an OCLC product development effort. OCLC could not identify a viable business plan for the service so dropped further development in December 2008.

John sought member input: Is the original concept, using existing storage facilities in the SE, still viable?

- Judy Russell discussed the project that Florida's public universities are working on, which is construction of a new high-density storage facility that would be shared among Florida libraries with strict controls on numbers of copies, etc. Judy will share information about the Florida system. Perhaps it could be the "first branch of the bank"?
- Bonnie emphasized the importance of ground rules. Plans can get hung up on concerns about the number of copies or completeness of runs. She supports neutral ownership of stored items (not belonging to any one institution). These decisions require trust agreements.
- A study group was formed, including Lynn Sutton, Flo Wilson and a Lyris staff person look at JSTOR and other issues as they relate to this concept.

Other Updates:

- ASERL is putting together a group purchase for Gale products. If interested, contact John Burger or Millie Jackson at U-Alabama.

- Also a group purchase of OUP Digital Reference Shelf; there's a defined buy-in period.
- Lyris in final stages of agreement to handle CIC's negotiation for group purchases
- Don't forget SAMM, on May 14-15, in Atlanta.

Other Updates -- FDLC:

Judy Russell reported on the FDLC meeting in Tampa several weeks ago. Directors from both Regional and Selective depositories were invited to attend and provide input on strategic planning for FDLC. There was considerable frustration expressed about aspects of the program. It was acknowledged that we need better catalog records for pre-1976 materials and a fully digitized legacy collection. A vendor expected to handle this project ran into snag converting records.

An RFP has been issued to find a vendor to digitize legacy collections, at no cost to the government, although the government would supply materials, metadata, etc. A recommendation on awarding that contract has been made, and a public announcement is expected soon.

Judy noted that some Regional depositories are likely to drop Regional depository status within the next few years. Some, in states which have two Regionals, are already stepping aside. Others are actively and openly discussing leaving the FDLP program. This may begin to get attention at high levels.

Someone asked what ASERL could do to encourage progress. Judy said that it's good for JCP, etc., to hear directly from library directors about their concerns and needs, to provide a balance for the perspectives of document librarians who communicate with these agencies frequently.

Judy also noted that it's important for Selective depository directors speak up. Attrition among Selectives is continuing and there's a huge amount of de-selection occurring. This is problematic as we don't have a national or regional plan for de-selection.

A white paper from ARL, included in the packet, surveys current projects related to reforming the operation of FDLP libraries.

Options for Library Assessment Tools

John noted that consortia have the option to contract for LibQual+ as a group. There is no discount for doing so, but it opens the opportunity for comparative analysis of results within the consortium.

Other possible directions include working together to identify best practices for using LibQual+ results. ASERL libraries can also participate in improving LibQual+ for the next-generation tool. There was interest in getting LibQual+ data in off-years - John will investigate.

SCOAP3

Margaret Ellingson, representing Rick Luce (Emory), made a pitch for additional participation in SCOAP3. There is a deadline of June 30. A webinar will be presented in early June for ASERL libraries.

Open Mic

Bill Garrison announced that a staff member at University of South Florida wants to begin a usage study of NetLibrary e-books by FTE and subject. The study would require libraries signing an acknowledgment to permit the use of their data in the study. Bill will get more information and report back to the group.

Panel Presentation - Lessons Learned from SACS Accreditation

John Ulmschneider talked about the principles of accreditation from the point of view of an evaluator. He stressed that integrity and precision of writing/communication are key. He talked about his experiences in the reaffirmation process. (see ppt handout)

Bob Byrd from Duke University talked about the work that must take place on campus and in the library during the reaccreditation process (see ppt also)

Bill Walker talked about lessons learned from Miami's re-accreditation experience, how the QEP & SACS processes can be used as a way to advance library programs. He recommended that library directors facing the re-accreditation process attend SACS Commission on Colleges annual meeting, held in Atlanta in December. It's a way to learn a lot about the process from a non-library-centric perspective and it will position the library well. He advised getting your library in the center of the accreditation process. On a more detailed level, it was also mentioned that libraries need to have documentation of agreements of all sorts - consortial and otherwise.

Wrap-Up

John Burger noted these follow-up tasks:

- Check with ASERL libraries about who's ready to start the RAPID; seek better pricing based on level of interest.
- Convene the study of shared storage options
- Seek funding for the library liaison training project.
- Seek more info re: consortial purchases of LibQual+ and off-year data
- Continue to pursue consortial purchases of resources.
- Next ASERL meeting = November 17-18, 2009 in Charleston, SC
- Host an informal ASERL group for those attending SAMM
- Director Action Item: Make sure ASERL has the appropriate names for ITDIIG group;

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:50 a.m.