CLA Today

Candidates for the CLA Board

Candidates for Vice President/President Elect

David Boudinot

Brief bio:
Adult Programming Librarian at the Henry Carter Hull Library (Clinton) since 2007. Former Chair of the CLA Career Development Committee, 2011 Annual Conference Co-Chair, current Conference Exhibits Chair. Member of ALA, PLA, & NELA in addition to CLA.

Membership organizations, such as CLA, need to demonstrate their value to recruit and retain members. What does CLA need to do to keep the organization relevant to library staff.

First of all, you need to communicate what the value of CLA is. As president of CLA I will work to improve communication between CLA and its existing members and will also reach out to non-members who can learn what the importance and relevance of a membership is to all library staff in Connecticut. I aim to do this by improving the CLA website, enhancing CLA’s social media footprint, and increasing the number of ways members can participate in CLA events.

To stay relevant, CLA needs to be a strong resource for librarians in our state and advocate for libraries, librarians, and their communities. Addressing the areas where librarians need the most help with budget battles, intellectual freedom challenges, and a workforce in transition is essential. CLA can communicate to the public why every dollar spent on a library is a good investment. CLA is essential for helping to facilitate collaboration between institutions, continuing to support library lobbying efforts in Hartford, and being respon-

Ben Shum

Brief bio:
Benjamin Shum is the Open Source Software Coordinator for Bibliomation, Inc., the largest consortium of public and school libraries in Connecticut. An original member of Bibliomation’s open source team, he joined the organization in 2009 and oversees the technical aspects of its Evergreen ILS. Benjamin is an active member of the Evergreen community, earning core committer status in 2012. He joined Connecticut Library Association in 2009 and founded the Technology Section, serving as its chair from 2009-2011. He is the 2013 Conference Co-Chair, having learned the ropes as the Assistant Conference Co-Chair for the 2012 Annual Conference. Benjamin received his B.S. in computer systems administration in 2008 from Andrews University and expects to graduate with his M.L.S. from Southern Connecticut State University in 2013.

Membership organizations, such as CLA, need to demonstrate their value to recruit and retain members. What does CLA need to do to keep the organization relevant to library staff.

Membership in Connecticut Library Association (CLA) provides a shared forum for building knowledge and a stage from which to chart the course of librarianship and libraries in Connecticut and beyond. Building up our local communities and being part of something greater provides numerous prospects for professional growth. The other members of CLA we meet along the way offer guidance, experience, and opportunities.
Book Reviews

Removing Barriers to Access: Two Books about Open Access
By Stephen Cauffman, Division of Library Development, Connecticut State Library

At its most basic, Open Access (OA) is a movement to make research articles freely available online so that anyone with an Internet connection can read them without charge. To that end, authors can either submit articles to peer-reviewed OA journals or deposit articles into an OA repository. Some authors also remove permission barriers by issuing their OA articles with a Creative Commons license. OA fosters the research process by removing barriers that hinder or prevent access. I recently had the pleasure to read two concise books on the topic of OA. Both authors make strong and persuasive cases in support of OA and they remain even-handed in their discussions of complex and sometimes thorny issues.

Open Access: What You Need to Know Now (American Library Association, ALA Editions Special Reports, 2011) is by Walt Crawford, author of numerous books and articles on topics in the library field. The ‘you’ in the title of the book is librarians and throughout the volume Crawford enumerates the benefits of OA to libraries, particularly as they are faced with the escalating costs of journal subscriptions and shrinking library budgets. Crawford gives OA issues and controversies separate chapters. He carefully delineates OA issues, defined as cases that need to be addressed, as opposed to OA controversies, which he subdivides into legitimate controversies and pseudo-controversies or myths. For example, Crawford sees ‘searchability and access’ to OA articles and journals through library search systems as an issue that needs to be addressed; whereas he sees the notion that scholarly articles would just confuse lay readers as a myth and a “particularly obnoxious elitist argument.” I have heard variations on this notion and I agree with Crawford.

Open Access (MIT Press, Essential Knowledge Series, 2012) is by Peter Suber, Director of the Harvard Open Access Project and a senior researcher at the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC). While Suber’s book is aimed primarily at researchers and policymakers, I believe that anyone interested in the topic of OA will find reading Suber’s thorough overview worthwhile and rewarding. Suber says one of the most persistent misunderstandings is that OA is done only by publishing in OA journals. As mentioned above, OA also can be accomplished by an author who deposits an article in an OA repository. Suber goes on to say that most ‘toll-access’ journals give blanket permission for authors to deposit a preprint or postprint version of the article into an OA repository.

I thought OA was only for research articles, but Suber makes it clear that any content that can be digitized and put online for free could be made available as OA. In the chapter on “Scope,” Suber discusses OA campaigns addressing other categories of content, including: theses and dissertations; research data; government data; conference presentations; novels, plays and poetry; source code; textbooks; and newspapers; among other types of content. Suber points out that scholarly journals don’t pay authors
for their submissions and, since money is not involved, it is more likely that authors of scholarly articles are willing to adopt some form of OA. Suber notes that in fields where authors and content creators are paid for their work OA is more difficult to implement.

OA is a movement that benefits researchers, authors, practitioners, and professionals, and virtually everyone. With barriers to accessing content removed we are better able to assist our patrons so OA clearly benefits libraries. I highly recommend both of these books: Crawford’s specifically to those working in libraries and Suber’s to anyone interested in OA.

(Note: the Middletown Library Service Center has a copies of both books available for loan. In OA fashion, Suber’s book will be available online in full-text in June, 2013, one year after the date of the print publication.)

President’s Message
By Carl R. DeMilia, CLA President 2012-2013

Ah, winter in Connecticut. We all know it eventually gives up but not usually without a fight. One thing that is sure to brighten the early days of Spring when they finally arrive is the Connecticut Library Association’s 122nd Annual conference – “Creating Community- In Our Towns, Our State and Our Profession”. This year the conference is being held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Cromwell on April 29-30.

Conference Co-Chairs, Michele Martin, Greenwich Library and Ben Shum, Bibliomation, have been working hard and have put together a conference that has something for all. Responding to suggestions, they have scheduled programs covering a wide variety of topical tracks. This year, programs for school and academic libraries are represented along with those for public libraries and some non-profits.

We are really honored to have Maureen Sullivan, ALA President, as the keynote speaker on Monday, April 29 who will discuss “The Promise of Libraries Transforming Communities”. Tuesday morning we have another exciting program. Maureen Sullivan, Ken Wiggins and I will be joining CT. Public Radio’s John Dankovsky for a live broadcast of his program “Where We Live”. This should be lots of fun!

David Boudinot, H.C. Hull Library and Christina Baum, SCSU, have done an amazing job with vendors and program sponsors. So be sure to take a stroll or two through the exhibitor’s area at the conference.

It looks like a really dynamic conference and we hope that we see many of you there!

Sadly, this is my last column as CLA President. Where did the past year go? I can tell you that it was an interesting year. It began with answering media questions regarding bed bugs and furries. (You learn something new everyday.) Recording a passage from Mark Twain’s Adventures of Huckleberry Finn in Twain’s library in Hartford was marvelous experience. Attending the Leadership Conference, Newbie Roundtable, CLASS Conference, and meeting with librarians from across the state was something I really enjoyed. This year saw the Membership and Editorial Committees take on new life and move forward. Being asked to promote libraries on the Faith Middleton radio program and interviews with CT. Public Radio and Quinnipiac University’s WQUN were fulfilling and positive. The Legislative Committee moved key pieces of legislation forward – the ebook and UELMA bills. It was a rewarding year and I am so grateful to everyone who helped me and answered my questions which I had many. Thank you for the giving me the opportunity to serve as CLA President and to serve the CT. library community.

Carl DeMilia is Director of the New Milford Public Library.
Interview with a Librarian

by Douglas Lord

Bookending Connecticut’s dual representatives at the American Library Association’s national I Love My Librarian award (Tunxis Community College’s Rachel Hyland was profiled in the February issue) is Rae Anne Locke, Elementary Library Media Specialist at the Saugatuck Elementary School (SES) in Westport.

Locke, who called receiving one of the ten nationwide awards as “a surprise and tremendous honor,” is known for structuring SES’ library around a ‘Secret Garden’ theme based on the Frances Hodgson Burnett title about two children who develop a friendship and transform themselves. Nominator Melissa Augeri wrote that Locke “…poured her heart and soul into planning, creating and growing the Secret Garden library into a vibrant, warm and inviting place that is much more than a school library. It is truly the learning hub for our entire school community.”

Locke is thrilled that the Secret Garden is “more than just a place in the school. It has become an analogy for the magic, mystery, and exploration that a library can enable.” She adds that, “libraries should be about positive energy, trust and humor.”

It seems as though the fun – and learning - never ends at Saugatuck. Routine events, like the Read Across America celebration of Dr. Seuss’ birthday are supplemented with ones that highlight how deeply Locke is embedded in the school’s learning culture -- and how she has created such an excellent reputation.

One morning finds her involved at ‘Rise ‘n Read,’ where parents come to the library before school to read and have breakfast – this week for kindergartners. Next week the fourth graders are going to do a Skype interview with author Kate McMullan related to their fantasy unit. Late this month picture book author Trinka Hakes Noble is visiting, and Locke is coordinating construction of a huge boa constrictor -- made of book recommendations inspired by Noble’s Jimmy’s Boo books -- snaking around the building. Meanwhile, the 3rd graders are completing a scavenger hunt that uses Ron Roy’s A to Z Mysteries as a tool to test their library knowledge, the 2nd graders are pairing fiction to non-fiction by topic, and the 5th graders are applying visual and digital literacy techniques to advertisements and photos.

In addition to this level of activity, Locke is a regular classroom presence and is known for collaborating with teaching staff and for committee work that “enhances and extends students’ learning outcomes and plans and implements meaningful, integrated learning projects,” says Barbara Beaman, SES Vice Principal. SES Technology Teacher Ken Hine echoes that sentiment, sharing that Locke “becomes a team member on all projects with which she becomes involved” and Melissa Augeri praised her “unique ability to cultivate meaningful relationships with students, staff and parents. It is through these relationships that she knows and ‘grows’ her students.” All this activity puts Locke’s ‘face’ on the library, and epitomizes her statement, “When we build relationships with students and colleagues, we can make a difference in their lives.”

Not surprisingly, Locke’s biggest daily challenge is time. “Sometimes there’s just not enough of it - or of me,” she says. “The library assistant’s time was halved three years ago, so that has made a significant impact. Locke adds, “I don’t like to disappoint anyone, and this is a high energy job with a fragmented work pattern. Collaborative units can take longer than planned because of increasingly tight and demanding classroom schedules.”

After receiving a Bachelor’s degree in Education from the University of Georgia, Locke earned her M.L.S. from Simmons College, then worked for nine years as
the elementary librarian at The Berkeley Carroll School in Park Slope, Brooklyn. “I saw being an LMS as the best combination of teacher and a librarian. I have the privilege of knowing and teaching the whole child--not just for one year, but each year--and watching them grow as readers and learners.”

Spurred by her growing family to relocate to the wilds of Fairfield County, Locke landed at Saugatuck where she calls it “a privilege” to teach and says that her Westport colleagues, parents, and administrators “encourage and inspire me to be the best I can be.”

Locke notes that “being involved in all aspects of school life is critical, as is advocating for our work’s importance.” She adds that as a profession, media specialists “need to make ourselves visible, strong, confident, and adaptable as well as smart--and promote, promote, promote! We need to work together to navigate change, so attending conferences, round-tables, and workshops has never been more important.”

“With the immense information overload of the internet,” says Locke, “school librarians have never been more relevant or important. We teach students to navigate the web, evaluate and use information effectively, and to think critically about what they find.”

Further, Locke says that school librarians “help inspire literacy and promote a lifelong love of reading in students; we are key to student learning in the twenty-first century.” She adds that, “our knowledge of best teaching practices, expertise in literature, and enthusiasm for books and research make a marked difference on student achievement.

“It is a very special school library media specialist who takes the time to be well connected with her local public library,” says Maxine Bleiweis, director of the Westport Public Library. “And Rae Anne is one of the best. She makes sure we know what is happening in her school, how we can collaborate, and shares all her resources—even great parent volunteers. On top of it all, she frequently volunteers for library events, like when she helped celebrate Westport’s February town wide read The Great Gatsby complete with flapper attire.”

If Locke could have dinner with any two people, living or dead, the meal would be her favorite Southern cuisine: charbroiled oysters, fried shrimp, grits casserole and cornbread shared with Ben Franklin and Nora Ephron.

Passionate about nature photography, Locke also loves movies, New York City, and her trusty Havanese bodyguard, who rarely leaves her side when she is home. Like all librarians, Locke is currently reading about a thousand books, including John Green’s The Fault in Our Stars and Because of Shoe and Other Dog Stories.

Like many libraries and media centers, SES’ Secret Garden isn’t a secret, Locke says. “It’s a community garden where everyone feels ownership and belongs. We’re all gardeners cultivating, changing it to meet our needs, transforming it.”

Another article in the same issue was titled, “Loving and Hating Computers: How the Staff Adapts to Automation.”

The article below was originally published in the Winter, 1981 issue of Connecticut Libraries.
At our most recent CLA editorial committee meeting, one of the questions discussed was what sort of content did our readers want to see as we planned for the coming year. Previous feedback showed that a technology column of some sort was popular, but should the topics be introductory in nature, more advanced, or a mix of the two? This article discusses a familiar technology, intended as an example of an accessible topic that hopefully provides something meaningful for all levels of users. Your feedback would be especially welcome as we try to keep our work relevant and interesting for the widest possible audience.

E-mail is ubiquitous in today’s workplace, and nearly everyone we know and work with uses it. So what is there to discuss? Actually, the biggest issue with e-mail is the simple fact that everyone does use it—A LOT. And relatively few of us entered the workplace anticipating how much time it can consume out of our working hours, just reading and replying to all of it. We may have been trained on how to connect to it and customize it a little bit, but most of us had it placed in front of us on our desks with little or no instruction about the importance of managing it aggressively in order to be able to get anything else done. If you often feel overwhelmed by the distraction of incoming e-mail, some of the following ideas may help you feel more in control.

The first rule for reducing time spent on your e-mail is to organize it. Ideally, you can do much of this before you even begin to look at your inbox. For example, most workplaces use Microsoft Outlook for e-mail. Incoming messages go into your inbox by default. But what about all of the messages you know you will regularly receive from a specific person or group? If you already created a few labeled subfolders in your inbox marked “the boss” or “the great secret librarian listserv”, that’s a great first step to sorting the incoming mail. Even better, you can go into your “rules and alerts” settings and set up rules that automatically direct messages from those sources into the subfolders you created for them. Now, when you open your inbox in the morning, all of those various listserv messages are sorted and set aside for when you have time, and you know where to look first for anything new from the boss.

Now that we have mentioned opening your inbox in the morning, the second rule for managing your e-mail is to schedule it. Plan for specific times each day when you will work on your messages, and when you will stop and move on to other things. Unless a specific requirement of your job is to monitor incoming messages and respond to them immediately, limit yourself to specific times in the day when you will check messages and reply, and when you will leave them alone to get other work done. If you can close your e-mail program entirely while you work on other things, so much the better.

The third and final rule of saving time with your e-mail is to read it only once. I attended a workshop many years ago, when e-mail was a relatively new tool for office workers, and its potential for drawing down on productive work time was just being discovered. This workshop was designed for managers, and this final point, derived from time management techniques for executives, is equally valuable to all of us. The concept here is simple, if not always easy to put into practice. When you read a message in your e-mail, immediately decide whether it falls into one of two possible categories: 1. items that require a response or action; or 2. anything else. The goal is to read the message once, do whatever needs to be done about it on the spot, if anything, and then delete it in one shot. In the years since, I have always considered it a goal to work toward with my inbox, and not necessarily universally achievable.
Boudinet Continued

sive to changes in our profession by offering programs relevant to the work we do.

I have served on a number of CLA committees, co-chaired the Annual Conference, and am currently the Conference Exhibits Chair. Being involved in CLA has connected me to a dynamic community of librarians and kept me current on library trends and issues that affect libraries in our state. Exhibitors at the Conference tell me year after year that we have the best conference in New England and I attribute this to the involvement and enthusiasm that Connecticut librarians have for our profession.

To me, the value of CLA is our wonderful community of librarians and library staff. The very nature of our profession is to help others, and by joining CLA and being an active member, we are able to advocate for our profession and the communities we serve. CLA must strive to facilitate growth in our profession, collaborate with partner institutions, and give librarians the information they need to influence positive change in their communities. ♦

Shum Continued

I was drawn to librarianship by the profession’s emphasis on sharing both resources and knowledge. Librarians are driven to help others obtain the information they need to succeed and achieve their goals. That willingness to share is also what makes participation in CLA so valuable. When I first joined, I met many other CLA members, and their eagerness and excitement for our profession infused me with that same zest and drive to be a part of something greater. CLA is our local library organization, and being local means that the others who are part of it are our neighbors and colleagues. We are all information professionals in an age where information is power. We should work together to improve our organizations and our services in order to enrich our patrons’ experiences and empower their learning.

I feel the key to attracting new members is increasing our overall visibility. We can achieve that by being part of more events around Connecticut, holding more regional meetups, gathering together more often than section meetings or once a year at the annual conference. We need to show our members and prospective members that CLA is present and eager to meet with them to get their input and ideas for our shared future. Having more opportunities to meet opens the door to sharing more regularly and swapping ideas for expanding our collaboration with each other and our local communities. It opens the gateway to bring us all closer together. As President of CLA, I would be honored to represent our organization and spread the word about CLA to encourage involvement in creating our collective vision for the future. ♦

Candidate for Recording Secretary

Michele Martin

Brief Bio:
Michele Martin was born and raised in Los Angeles and has lived in San Francisco, Chicago, New York City, and Arlington, Texas. After living in Connecticut since 1991 she considers this state closest to home. Michele has worked in libraries since 1998 and finds her coworkers and work environment stimulating - a place where she learns something new every day. In her spare time she enjoys reading on her Kindle, playing Scrabble on her iPad, and making small tapestries on a handmade loom that she shares on Tumblr.

Membership organizations, such as CLA, need to demonstrate their value to recruit and retain members. What does CLA need to do to keep the organization relevant to library staff?

Organizations demonstrate their value by offering something to their members. The way for CLA to be relevant in order to attract and retain membership is to offer its members professional development opportunities.

Professional development opportunities that prepare library workers to become proficient in emerging technologies. By anticipating trends, organizations respond by providing training workshops, seminars, and conferences that improve and build upon the skills of library workers.

Professional development opportunities that provide members with a chance to become active within the organization. It is often through active participation in an organization that individual talents are reinforced and meaningful professional relationships are created outside of one’s immediate work environment. Contributing to an organization, on any level, allows people to make a commitment to both their profession and to their own professional development. As 2013 CLA Conference Co-chair, I was impressed by the commitment of individual members and committee, region, and section representatives who submitted noteworthy programs that will contribute to our members’ professional development on many levels. By giving to the organization or taking what is offered, it is the members who give value to their professional organization. To be of service to its members, CLA needs to continue to offer professional development opportunities to its members not only recruit and retain them, but to foster their participation in the organization. ♦

Candidate for NELA Rep

Beth Crowley

Brief Bio:
After earning my MLS from Southern Connecticut State University in 2000, I began working as a Children’s Librarian at the Groton Public Library in Groton, Connecticut.
During my tenure at Groton, I held positions as Head of Youth Services and Manager of Library Public Services. In 2012, I accepted the position as Director of the Scranton Library in Madison, Connecticut. In 2008, I completed the intensive, five-day New England Library Leadership Symposium (NELLS) and in 2011 I returned to NELLS as the Connecticut mentor. I have served on the Connecticut Library Association Board for the past five years first as Co-Chair of the Children’s Section and currently as Recording Secretary. I am also a member of the CLA Career Development Committee, Co-Chair and founder of the Connecticut Library Consortium’s New Directors Roundtable and a member of the New England Library Association.

**Why is membership in NELA useful and/or important for CLA?**

The benefit of belonging to the regional New England Library Association as well as the Connecticut Library Association is the ability to create a network of library professionals that goes beyond our State’s borders. While there are many differences in the way libraries are run throughout New England, many of our challenges; decreasing budgets, higher usage, staying relevant in an ever-changing world, are the same. Participating in the New England Library Leadership Symposium and attending the annual NELA conference has given me the opportunity to discuss these challenges and how libraries in New England are solving them. I now have a broader perspective from which to make decisions in my own library.

Professional Associations face their own challenges that can benefit from the insights of similar organizations. How to attract and retain members, Board policy development, and new ways of providing professional development are areas CLA can explore through conversations with NELA members. When it comes advocacy there is strength in numbers. Unfair pricing practices of e-books is an example of an issue that would benefit from a regionalized rather than a state-by-state approach. Federal funding for libraries is another area where a unified approach could help ensure all libraries in our region are supported fairly.

New England is not defined by large county library systems, however, for our individual state associations and our members to be able to come together through NELA in support, professional development and advocacy is a benefit that will make all of our libraries better and stronger.

**Candidate for Region 1 Rep**

**Patricia Lunn**

**Brief Bio:**

I started off my career as a marine botanist. I graduated from Drew University with a BA major in Botany and minor in Zoology. I went on to graduate work in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. I should have known when I was spending more time in the library rather than in the laboratory that books and libraries would be my future. I started my journey in libraries by volunteering in my local library when my children were small. I found my “home” - I enrolled at SCSU for my MLS. I worked as circulation staff and then on to Adult Services. I was treasurer and board member for WCLC. When the regional councils were dissolved, I worked toward the formation of CLC. I have been director of the Woodbury Public Library since 1999. After a life changing head-on car accident in 2007, I found that being in a rehab hospital situation for 6 months opened up a new world of reference and reader's advisory. Everyone from doctors, nursing staff, and patients wanted to know what to read next or what to do about their reluctant reader. I found that one never stops being a librarian.

Membership organizations such as CLA need to demonstrate their value to recruit and retain members. What does CLA need to do to keep the organization relevant to library staff? As most library budgets have been cut, it is the role of CLA to make sure that library staff remain engaged and up to date. This is on a personal level as librarian and on the level of the local library in general. Workshops for directors, supervisors, and support staff are necessary to disseminate the current information regarding technology and library practices. We come away from workshops invigorated and anxious to apply the lessons learned to our own library situation. More than ever, we must join together in a collaborative effort of towns, schools, and the legislature to enrich the lives of every resident of our state. I think everyone could become more involved in educating our legislators in Hartford. I think that we need to increase outreach to our support staff. This could be the key to invigorating our membership. Support staff is on the front line (or circulation desk) in our libraries. We need workshops and training that will energize them for their own libraries and for the organization. They are our future.†

**Candidate for Region 4 Rep**

**Sheri Szymanski**

**Brief Bio:**

Name a job in a library and it is likely that I have it listed on my resume: Student Page and Circulation Clerk at Sacred Heart University; LTA and Children’s Library Assistant at the Monroe Public Library; Head of Technical Services at the Trumbull Library; Head of Access Services at the Westport Library and Assistant Director at the Stratford Library. I earned my MLS at Southern CT State University. When I’m not working, you can find me hiking CT trails, planning my next road trip, singing in choir, cheering on the Bridgeport...
Candidates for Region 5 Rep

Christy Billings

Brief Bio:
My name is Christy Billings, and I am an LTA in Circulation at the Russell Library in Middletown. I have been working in libraries since 1996, starting as a Page at the Wallingford Public Library. Along the way, I have had the good fortune not only to work with the fabulous Wallingford Library Circulation and Children’s staff, but also the great staff at the Woodbridge and Branford Libraries.

I went to Three Rivers for my Library Technology Assistant Certification, graduating with honors in 2006. I was the student representative on the Library Technology Advisory Board from 2006-2010. I am currently a co-organizer of a weekly Veteran’s Writing Group at the Russell Library and am also on the One Book One Middletown committee, which each year, chooses a title for a community read to promote literacy and start conversations. I have helped plan some unique programs through One Book, such as a Ropes Course challenge day, partnering the book Unbroken by Laura Hillenbrand with the Middlesex YMCA. I have been a parent volunteer at The Hole In the Wall Gang Camp, and an American Cancer Society Relay for Life Captain.

Please vote for me to represent Region Five Libraries!

**Membership organizations such as CLA need to demonstrate their value to recruit and retain members. What does CLA need to do to keep the organization relevant to library staff?**

In the last few years libraries have gone through some very difficult financial times. Library staff have watched their duties increase as they are asked to do more with less. The needs of patrons have shifted a great deal, and continue to evolve. The technology gap has widened, not closed in the last few years, despite our best efforts. We have patrons standing in front of us on a daily basis who are bewildered job searchers, floundering as they seek to get a handle on applying online for a job. Libraries are being thrust into a world of different kinds of technologies where a patron expects library staff to be knowledgeable not only in where to access information but a wizard of E-books, Overdrive, tablets, iPods, and iPads. We need to be up to date on all the latest in Pinterest, Twitter and Face Book, Four-square and apps. Even more so than in the past, library staff need to be able to offer their skills in technology as much to patrons as information. People still love to read, watch films, and listen to music. CLA needs to help all members, from Directors to Support Staff, be able to competently show patrons ways to do these things with contemporary methods.

Some examples of the other myriad changes taking place in the library world are the outsourcing of some technical service duties, and the arrival of RFID tags. Once an entire collection is tagged, the duties of Circulation Staff will change to being more automated. Membership organizations such as CLA need to support their members by offering to train them on how to remain relevant, current, and still employable as these unsettling changes occur.

In the recent year, disaster planning has taken a prominent place in the conversations at libraries. We have endured bedbugs, Storm Sandy, and the devastation wrought by the gunman at Sandy Hook. CLA needs to meet informational needs on timely topics by training library staff how to recognize and cope with disasters. Whether the disaster is along the lines of bedbugs in books or something much more dangerous such as an armed assailant, library staff are thirsty for knowledge of how to handle crisis situations. CLA needs to have the flexibility to be able to shift gears as their members needs change. As hard as it is to see into the future, the CLA members depend on their organization to be forward thinking so they can continue to be an asset to the communities they serve.

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Karen Jensen

Brief Bio:

Karen Jensen is the director of the James Blackstone Memorial Library in Branford, CT. Prior to her appointment in January 2013, she was director at the Hagaman Memorial Library in East Haven. She previously served as assistant director at the Plumb Memorial Library in Shelton, and reference librarian in Newington. She is an active member of Rotary International and her local chamber of commerce. She has served on the board of Bibliomation Inc. She lives in Shelton.

Membership organizations such as CLA need to demonstrate their value to recruit and retain members. What does CLA need to do to keep the organization relevant to library staff?

An important way for CLA to demonstrate its value to members and potential members is to ask them what they value. As region 5 rep, my goal is to develop regular lines of communication not only to report news, but to gather useful feedback for CLA to use as it evaluates new initiatives and training opportunities.

Plan your Day: Before you begin the registration process, you will need to decide which workshops, or sessions, you will attend at the conference. It’s a good idea to print out, or have available, the program descriptions (PDF) during registration.

If you have a disability and require an accommodation in order to participate in a program, please contact the CLA office (860-346-2444) or cla[at]ctlibrarians[dot]org by April 18, 2013

Voting will take place electronically from May 6 to 20.

Members will receive an email with voting instructions.