2011 Kansas Library Association Annual Meeting

Susan Johns-Smith

Jamie LaRue (director, Douglas County Libraries, Castle Rock, CO) was the keynote speaker. He addressed the group on the theme "Who Speaks for Us?" and included many tips for proactive advocacy among library patrons and communities, demonstrating the power of our stories to advocate for libraries. The presentation was also a useful study on how to (and how not to) use demographic data effectively in order to reach out to the communities we serve.

Thomas Fox Averill (writer-in-residence and professor of English, Washburn University) gave the closing keynote address, commemorating the 150th anniversary of Kansas statehood by retelling the state's history in literature and folk songs with just a little bit of fiction thrown in.

The conference had the normal dazzling array of multiple sessions per track over a two- and a half-day period. A vastly improved exhibit area was a new feature this year (in the opinion of this reviewer probably the highlight of the conference) with a conversation area filled with overstuffed chairs and sofas, surrounded by coffee, soft drinks, and water. The area served as the source of excellent food breaks and provided a comfortable and central commons area where attendees could easily mingle with both vendors and each other. Vendor participation was robust, both in quantity and quality of vendors, making the exhibits of 2011 one of the most successful in the history of the annual conference.

Following is a selection of programs of broader significance to the serials community:

- The College and University Library Section (CULS) discussed several new initiatives under Cynthia Akers, outgoing CULS President. One initiative was the proposed movement of the CULS Annual Conference, normally held in the fall, to a spring meeting in conjunction with KLA. This has the added benefit of keeping travel costs down and provides significantly more tracks and opportunities for academic programming during both the CULS and KLA session times. In another presentation, Akers provided details and a discussion on "Re-Creating a Vision for CULS: Adventures in Open Access," which described the ongoing steps for creation of refereed open access proceedings to be derived from CULS presentations. An ISSN has been requested and the venture was met with enthusiastic support from the academic librarians present.
- "Going Mobile, the Ins and Outs of an Academic Library Mobile Site" was presented by Wichita State University librarian Mary Walker and Butler Community College librarian Ronda Holt. The presentation showed two approaches to implementing a mobile application for smart phones as an access point for library portal services. The presentation was also useful as a resource for library experiences with QR codes, the square, two-dimensional matrix "quick response" barcodes starting to be used with mobile devices. The QR codes can provide embedded URLs which, in turn, can direct patrons to specific Web sites and informational pages by scanning the QR code with a patron's mobile device.
- The KLA Technical Service Roundtable (KLA-TSRT) met and incoming officers for 2011–2012 include newly-elected chair Art Gutierrez (Emporia State University), vice-chair Morgan McCune (Pittsburg State University); and secretary/treasurer Merry Bower (Kansas State University). Thanks were given to

outgoing Web master Char Simser (Kansas State University) and the group welcomed Earl Givens (Emporia State University) as the new Web master. The TSRT group continues to discuss and seek avenues for continuing education for electronic resource management, RDA training sessions around the state, discovery-tool search engines, and other serials, acquisitions, and cataloging issues that continue to be of concern in academic, public, and even school library decision-making.

Many additional presentations were provided at the conference to over 400 participants and fifty-plus vendors. This year KLA once again became a premiere event in the state of Kansas for all librarians. The next KLA-CULS conference will be held October 20–21, 2011, in Manhattan, KS. The next KLA conference will be held April 11–13, 2012, at the Hyatt Regency in Wichita, KS.

New England Technical Services Librarians Spring 2011 Conference: 2020 Vision: A New Decade for Technical Services

Andrée J. Rathemacher, Michael A. Cerbo II and Yuan Li

Innovate or Become Obsolete: Technical Services Staffing for the 21st Century

The morning keynote speaker, Bradford Lee Eden (associate university librarian for Technical Services & Scholarly Communication, University of California, Santa Barbara) spoke on technical services staffing for the twenty-first century. Eden stated that he was speaking from the position of library administrator, a position that "broadens perspective and focus, but may not be welcomed."

Eden reviewed a list of catalysts for change in libraries. He noted that state support for higher education will continue to decline, as higher education is no longer perceived as a public good. The Google book settlement will eventually be approved in some form, at which time Google Books will replace print collections and Google will become "another Elsevier." Social networking is prevalent; we work in an environment in which we can talk to anyone in the world at any time. Print collections are moving off-site through distributed print repositories like the Western Regional Storage Trust as the full costs of open stack storage are recognized and the need to accommodate people and collections puts demands on library space. In some cases, technical services staff are being relocated outside libraries. Meanwhile, libraries are shifting resources to provide access to unique local collections.

At the same time, libraries are moving from the local level to the network level in terms of collaboration, metadata, and resource sharing, of which the University of California's implementation of WorldCat Local is an example. Local and regional consortiums are not enough, and they are no longer affordable; we need mega consortiums. As technical services work flows are streamlined through efforts such as the University of California's Next-Generation Technical Services initiative, technical services staff can be involved in open access and scholarly communication initiatives. Institutional repositories are the future. It will be the job of libraries to assist faculty in preserving digital data as mandated by the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation and to educate faculty about copyright issues and the importance of retaining their rights as authors.

Another catalyst for change is new technologies and the shift toward mobile devices. Students need media literacy, not information literacy. As librarians, we need to understand what can be done with media devices and educate students in their use, for example in exploring 3D information visualization resources currently available. This is how users want to learn, not by opening a book. At the same time, we are faced with the need for assessment. In this climate of budget cutting, we are expected to continually prove our value to our parent institutions. Higher education administrators used to think of libraries and information technology as black holes into which they threw money; now they have simply stopped throwing the money. Appeals for increased book budgets no longer hold sway at the provost level; administrators want immediate results and "bang for the buck." Finally, the library catalog is in a state of flux, with competition to proprietary integrated library system vendors through open source solutions such as Pines/Evergreen and Koha and from OCLC's Web Scale Management Services.

In the context of these changes, Eden asserted that library directors face three big issues. The first is the cost involved in maintaining, updating, and researching bibliographic records. This includes costs from bibliographic utilities like OCLC and library system vendors, personnel costs, and redundant work in support of local practices that are no longer sustainable. The second issue is that users no longer think of the library and the online catalog as the first option for obtaining information; the library is usually the last option, if an option at all. And third, if and when the current economic crisis goes away, staffing in libraries will never go back to previous levels.

In light of these issues, Eden believes that technical services librarians need to end the status quo and be comfortable with the concept of "good enough." Eden pointed out that the Library of Congress has moved staff and resources from cataloging to the digitization of unique resources, and that Google is the number one way that people begin their information searches. The precision and exactness of bibliographic records, while laudable and of value in the long term, is neither sustainable nor marketable in the current information environment. Libraries walked away twenty-five years ago when faculty asked for help creating metadata standards for their disciplines, but now this is what we need to be doing. Librarians need to assist faculty in creating crosswalks between various metadata standards.

Eden suggested that technical services librarians learn to be proactive rather than reactive. They should "lean into their discomfort" and learn new skills. They also need perspective and should "work to live, not the other way around." Eden told the audience that, "if you live to work, you have a problem. It's just a job. When you go home, do you really need to worry about the Library of Congress?" Library administrators, in these tough budget times, are looking for staff members who maintain a positive attitude toward change and life, who are willing to grow and learn both professionally and personally, and who can work outside of their comfort zone when it comes to helping the library to fulfill its mission and goals. On a concrete level, Eden suggested that technical services librarians ask for professional development opportunities through Webinars (given that little money exists to support conference attendance). They should assist, not hinder, reorganization efforts and be willing to volunteer in patron-facing areas of the library that might need assistance due to staff shortages, for example circulation or interlibrary loan. Technical services librarians should learn non-MARC metadata so they can apply their expertise in the organization and description of print resources to the digital environment. They should also learn scanning and digitization skills so that metadata can be assigned to digital objects at the time of creation.

At the departmental level, Eden offered several points of advice. He suggested conducting a process review of all current workflows, revising and redesigning them for efficiency. Backlogs should be eliminated, even if that means cataloging some resources with brief records, since any access is better than none. Acquisitions departments should contract with book vendors to provide all English-language print materials in shelf-ready format. After establishing an acceptable rate of error, incoming print materials should be reviewed only once or twice a year. Technical services librarians should be provided with the training needed to digitize unique collections and describe them using non-MARC metadata standards. They should also be trained to offer metadata support and research planning assistance for faculty and students working with data sets. Project management skills will be in high demand.

Eden summarized a symposium report by Susan Gibbons, "Time Horizon 2020: Library Renaissance," in which she stated that "technical services and collection development will be at the center of the next significant phase of library transformation."[1] Gibbons sees the distinction between interlibrary loan and acquisitions dissolving as collections are delivered just-in-time in response to user needs. Resources will shift "towards the identification, preservation, and some level of republication of books held uniquely by each library," and the emphasis of technical services will change from the acquisition of content to the user's discovery of content, especially locally created materials.

In conclusion, Eden stated that success for technical services librarians in the coming years will come from maintaining a sense of perspective. Throughout his career, he has found that success has been based primarily on mindset and attitude, and only minimally on knowing specific processes and techniques. He suggested that attendees get rid of limiting habits and beliefs that slow them down and that they find the confidence to dream and act big. Eden rhetorically asked audience members what their position was on the future of their careers and then presented two options in response. The reactive option involves whining, complaining, being uncooperative and angry, and holding back progress. The proactive option involves being accepting, moving forward, assisting, experimenting, and learning.

The "Unified Discovery Platform" and the Library Catalog: Teammates or Rivals?

Following the morning keynote address, four concurrent breakout sessions were offered. In one, Cecilia P. Tittemore (head of Cataloging and Metadata Services, Dartmouth College Library) presented a comparison of Serials Solutions' Summon discovery platform to the traditional library catalog.

Summon is a discovery platform developed by Serials Solutions that allows patrons to search the entire library catalog along with other information resources that are available through the Web. Through Summon, the 2.5 million resources in the Dartmouth College library catalog are expanded to 274 million. Summon can be described as a single portal that allows users access to the catalog and databases, plus much more.

Tittemore characterized the difference in metadata standards between the library catalog and the discovery platform as the difference between a highly structured versus a blended metadata structure. Whereas library catalogs retrieve items using searchable vocabulary based on established standards (e.g., Anglo-American Cataloging Rules and Resource Description and Access) and do not rank search results by relevance, discovery platforms use a more Internet-based approach. In this method, many different sources