

LSSIRT Newsletter



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LSSIRT President's Corner

In January prior to the midwinter meeting, I assumed the duties as the President of LSSIRT. I appreciate all the kind comments received at the midwinter meeting and also through e-mail. I will try my best to serve this Round Table and trust that I can count on your help. We need the continued support of our members with participation in activities for our group to grow through new ideas, suggestions, or even perhaps potential projects for support staff that LSSIRT can develop. There is also a great need for volunteerism to serve as a committee chair or a member of the various committees we have available.

Our membership has increased rapidly and we are still growing strong. I was delighted to see an email message from ALA this week that the registration numbers for the annual conference are up compared to previous years at this point in time. I believe the Conference Within A Conference (CWC) we have planned this year will be even better than last year's. We have three exciting LSSIRT programs on the schedule at separate times so you can attend all three if you choose. The instructors featured will be Maureen Sullivan, Vicki Burger and Linda Slusar in addition to other tracks offered as well

as special program events. I hope you can attend the full conference but if you just have time for the CWC, it will be well worth the trip. You won't want to miss it!

NOTE: A reminder if you are going to New Orleans: the LSSIRT Business/Membership meeting is scheduled for Monday, June, 26th from 8:00 am-12:30 pm. I confirmed that coffee, and pastries, etc. will be available as we did for the midwinter meeting, so feel free to join us. Check the LSSIRT web site at <http://www.ala.org/lssirt/> for the exact location.

Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond our control, our LSSIRT Saturday Night Out event was cancelled because of Katrina. I was contacted by the President of the Louisiana Library Association Support Staff Section (LaSSAL) in January to offer their hospitality to our group. I suggested perhaps we could make alternate plans and arrange a place where everyone can get together for the Saturday night dinner. They have recommended Copeland's, which is a short streetcar ride from the conference center. If you view their website (<http://tinyurl.com/qd8do>) you will see why I'm excited about going. Not only does the food look scrump-

tious and is highly recommended by this group, but they offer a reduction in menu prices in honor of their birthday celebration this year. Since the original event was eliminated from the ALA registration site before this idea was proposed, the logistics and details are being worked out for either a pre-payment method or "dutch treat." As the details become available, I will send them to the members listserv and we will post to the website. So stay tuned for plans of a good meal & an opportunity to meet others and network.

If you would like to communicate with me for one reason or another, my inbox is always available to you: knoches@mail.etsu.edu I will try to answer any and all questions. I firmly believe there is always room to grow, so comments or criticism given in a constructive manner are welcome as well. I will make a mistake here or there and I certainly don't know everything; but willing to learn where needed or seek the advice of others who have come before me in this capacity. I want the best for all our members and hope you'll join me in continuing to make LSSIRT the best it can be.

Sue Knoche, President



2006 Conference Within a Conference

At this year's ALA Annual meeting, we are excited to offer our latest Conference Within a Conference for library support staff. The theme is "Empowerment 2006: Taking Charge in a Sea of Change." The events will kick-off with a continental breakfast on Sat. June 24th. Invited speakers include Charlie Fox and Ed Martinez, former editors

for *Library Mosaics*, *The Magazine for Support Staff*, and Maureen Sullivan, speaking on Effective Communication Skills.

There will be many exciting sessions throughout the two day conference. For more detailed information, visit the CWC website at:

<http://tinyurl.com/je7gs>

The conference will hold a closing session and luncheon on Sun. June 25th. The guest speaker will be Cali Williams Yost, President of Work+Life Fit, Inc. and author of *Work+Life: Finding the Fit That's Right for You*.

LSSIRT looks forward to greeting you all there!

A Call for LSSIRT Volunteers!

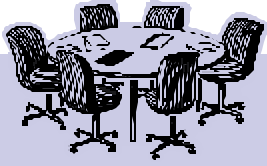
Below is a list of committees within our organization that remain vacant and need to be filled. After sending this out via e-mail early in March, I have only heard from a handful of individuals and those that have not confirmed or asked to be removed remain on this list with a (?) and need to contact me before the list is submitted to ALA. Remember, as the chair you would be responsible to attend both Midwinter and Annual meetings, but as a committee member it should be mostly virtual. Please contact me via email: knoches@mail.etsu.edu or phone (423) 439-8834, ASAP so the roster can be forwarded to ALA in May. LSSIRT needs your help!

Sue Knoche, President

LSSIRT COMMITTEE	VOLUNTEER STATUS	POTENTIAL DUTIES
Constitution & By-Laws	Chair /committee members Kent Slade (?) chair	Keeping by-laws & constitution up dated
Education	Chair / members	Continuing education
Fund Raising	Chair / members	Fund raising possibilities including our Night Out for Annual meeting.
Marketing	Chair / committee members Rose Sullivan (?)	Promoting LSSIRT
Membership	Glenda Cornelious (?) as member or other members needed	Promoting membership & sending welcome letters, etc.
Nominating	Committee members	Nominations for Steering Committee names to be placed on the election ballot
Program	Committee members	Chaired by the VP/Pres.-Elect each year for programming at the annual conference.
Publications/Communications	1 Committee member	Newsletters & communications to keep members current.
National Directory	Committee member	Updating current information for the directory and possibly adding entries for new state groups
Strategic Planning	Recommending Jim Hill, chair / need committee members	Strategic planning for LSSIRT's future
COPE-3 Recommendations	Diane Fay, chair / committee members (?)	Record progress & work on recommendations from COPE-3 in 2003, report to Lorelle Swader for feedback to ALA Executive Board.

A Call for LSSIRT Volunteers! (cont.)

ALA or ALA-APA COMMITTEE	VOLUNTEER STATUS	POTENTIAL DUTIES
ALA Advocacy Coordinating Group Assembly	Vacant - Susan Hinds (?)	To exchange information & share ideas for programming & training of advocacy.
ALA Awards	Sue Knoche (current Pres. only)	
ALA Diversity	Vacant	To provide a forum to communicate the needs & concerns of diverse groups within ALA (?)
ALA Education Assembly	Vacant - Denita Hampton (?)	To provide an opportunity to exchange information, share ideas, express concerns pertaining to education for library service.
ALA Committee on Education	Vacant	
ALA HRDR Advisory Committee	Jim Hill (2005-2007) / 2 others may be able to be appointed (?)	To advise the office of HRDR on activities, problems, procedures related to library concerns.
ALA Membership Committee	Nina Manning (2005-2007)	Membership initiatives.
ALA Orientation, Training & Leadership Committee	Vacant	To plan and coordinate training & leadership development for member leaders at all levels.
ALA-APA Standing Committee on Salaries & Status of Library Workers	Meralyn Meadows (2005-) (?)	To guide ALA-APA activities in support of better salaries, comparable worth, pay equity and similar programs related to the status of librarians and other library workers.
ALA Recruitment Assembly (highly recommended by Lorelle)	Vacant	To facilitate communications about activities related to recruiting for the profession
ALA Roundtable Coordinating Assembly	Sue Knoche (2005-2007) Sandy Olson (2006-2008)	Acts as a conduit for information among round tables and various units and offices of ALA
ALA-APA Sirsi-Dynix Award Jury	Jennifer Kutzik (2005-2006) will be vacant	Serve on jury panel for the Sirsi-Dynix Award
ALA Nominating Committee	Sue Knoche (2005-2006) Now vacant	Part of a panel to recruit and recommend names for councilors to be on the ballot.
Liaison: ALCTS Education Committee	Sandy Olson (2006) will be vacant	To oversee the division's continuing education programs outside the conference setting & develop criteria for such programs.



ALA LSSIRT Steering Committee Meeting Mini-Minutes

ALA LIBRARY SUPPORT STAFF INTERESTS ROUND TABLE

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING MINI-MINUTES

Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center, San Antonio, Texas

Saturday, January 21, 2006
8:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

LSSIRT STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Jim Hill
Sue Knoche
Nina Manning

Jennifer S. Kutzik
Carol Thomas
Sandy Olson

Linda Porter
Jack Fitzpatrick

ALA STAFF LIAISONS PRESENT:

John Chrastka
Darlena Davis
Lorelle Swader

1. Sue stated for the record that LSSIRT President, Ali Poffinberger, resigned January 3, 2006, due to health reasons. As Vice-President/President-Elect, Sue assumed the Presidency.
2. The Steering Committee voted to endorse a Council resolution to designate permanent seats for the larger Round Tables, based on membership above 10% of the total ALA membership. Currently, four are above the 10%, including LSSIRT. If this resolution is approved by Council, it must be approved by the ALA membership.
3. LSSIRT made \$505.89 on the Chicago Night Out and ended the year with a Fund Balance of \$11,412.58.
4. John Chrastka, ALA Manager for Membership Development, recognized the rapid growth of our Round Table, currently numbering 792. He cited a healthy balance of job titles which lends real strength to strategic planning and joint programming. The largest overlap of our membership is with RUSA. He also reported on the pilot joint membership programs in Alabama, Kansas, Massachusetts and New York.
5. The proposed ALA membership dues increase will raise LSSIRT dues from \$35 to \$46 over 3 years. The last dues increase was in 1999. More money is needed to support the ALA Ahead to 2010 initiatives.
6. The Steering Committee approved a Council resolution honoring *Library Mosaics*. It will be brought forward to ALA Council in New Orleans.
7. The Steering Committee made a \$250 contribution to the Gerald Hodges Fund, in support of intellectual freedom issues and legal challenges to legislation like CIPA and the USA Patriot Act. Gerald Hodges, ALA Associate Executive Director for Communication and Marketing, died January 10, 2006, in Chicago at the age of 61.
8. Dorothy Morgan reported on the Certification Task Force. She expressed regret that the certification survey still has not been statistically analyzed. However, the clear message from the survey is that respondent's favor certification and it appears they favor certification based

on experience. However, a certificate of this type would carry less weight than a license from an accredited institution. LSSIRT will need the backing of ALA-APA plus a division (like LAMA or PLA) to move forward with a recommendation.

9. Lorelle Swader reported 25 registrants for the Pre-Midwinter Institute "Circulation – Frontline and First in Service." Debra Wilcox Johnson of Johnson & Johnson Consulting was the facilitator. The New Orleans Conference Within a Conference is titled "Empowerment 2006: Taking Charge in a Sea of Change." The conference will be held Saturday, June 24 from 8 am-5:30 pm and Sunday, June 25 from 8 am-2:30 pm. The highlighted programs will be a presentation by former *Library Mosaics* editors Charlie Fox and Ed Martinez, sessions on resume writing and interviewing skills, "Effective Communication Skills" presented by Maureen Sullivan and a closing session address by Cali Williams Yost of Work+Life Fit, Inc. Registration fees will include breakfast on Saturday, lunch on Sunday, admission to the exhibits and admission to the ALA Opening General Session, featuring speaker Madeleine Albright.

10. The Steering Committee voted to change the terms of office for regular Members-at-Large from 3 years to 2 years. This proposal will go on the ALA ballot for membership approval.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer S. Kutzik, Secretary

Complete minutes may be found on the LSSIRT website:
<http://www.ala.org/lssirt/>

Pre-Midwinter Institute for Library Support Staff

The inaugural Pre-Midwinter Institute for Library Support Staff or Paraprofessionals was held on Friday, January 19, 2006 in San Antonio, Texas. The focus of the program was “Circulation

— Frontline and First in Service” presented by Debra Wilcox Johnson. This special support staff event was organized by ALA Conference Services. There were 25 attendees. Thank

you to everyone who organized, attended and supported this first-time event. Let ALA know if you would attend more conference programming like this!

“Circulation — Frontline and First in Service” Report

by Susan Hinds, Auburn University



Pre-Midwinter Institute for Library Support Staff or Paraprofessionals

Sponsored by the American Library Association and the Office for Human Resources Development and Recruitment.

Paraprofessionals attending ALA Midwinter in San Antonio this past January had the opportunity to participate in a one day pre-conference titled, “Circulation—Front Line and First in Service.” The presentation was given in the Henry B. Gonzales Convention Center, in a room as far away as possible from the entrance.

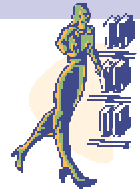
However, the walk was well worth it!

Debra Wilcox Johnson of Johnson and Johnson Consulting was the leader for the day. When I arrived and was greeted by Debra, I thought she looked familiar. I soon discovered to my delight that I had met her before, not in person, but through the “Soaring to Excellence” series that is offered to staff in my library, Auburn University Libraries in Auburn, Alabama. I remembered enjoying her presentations and felt that I was in for a fun day filled with laughter and learning. I was not disappointed. There were people from all types of libraries from all across America in attendance. I discovered once again that it is a small world. Another attendee, sitting at my table, was from Columbus, Georgia—a town about thirty minutes away

from Auburn. I discovered in our conversation about services their library offers to AU students that were new to me. You never know when participation and conversation will ultimately result in better services to your patrons.

Debra began by talking about the management side of circulation customer service. We discovered the best way to find out about customer service was to go shopping. Discussing an individual’s experiences encountered while shopping in various locations is a great way to get your staff talking about customer service. Debra also explained that external customer service is mirrored from internal service.

(Continued on next page.)



“Circulation — Frontline and First in Service” Report (cont.)

The most exciting discussion we had during the morning was about the importance of circulation. To me, circulation is the heart of the Library, but sometimes it's difficult for me to explain why I feel this way even after working twenty seven years there. Our discussion led us to discover that most patrons assume if you work the desk in front of a door, you should know the answer to every question they might ask. The majority of the time, the first desk is the circulation desk. This means that circulation staff will see more people than any other library staff member. Circulation staff are the front line for moving materials. They are the first in line to do problem solving. Circulation staff make a first impression on patrons as they walk into a building, thus setting the tone for the remainder of the visit. It takes a person with good self esteem, energy, organizational skills and one whose dependability is unquestionable. The ability to “like” people is also one important trait for someone working at a circulation point.

Debra led the group in listing skills a good circulation employee should possess. Some of these included, be-

ing able to put yourself in their place; great smile; being able to think about what you say before you say it; understanding that there are no “stupid” questions;

being a creative problem solver along with many others. One platinum rule that came out of this session was, “to be attuned to customers in order to treat them like they wanted to be treated.”

After a great lunch we discussed ways we could do a better job as a teacher of customer service skills. One of the most important statements we heard was to remember to NEVER say to a patron, “our policies state” or the “computer says.” This may automatically set you up for failure when dealing with a problem patron.

One of the goals we identified as a group was to be consistently flexible. This is difficult at times because we do have to work within certain parameters. As a co-worker you have to find your voice. According to Debra we all have “choices and voices.” We have to consistently offer good feedback to our staff and encourage them to use their “voice.” Everyone in the

organization is responsible for creating and maintaining a good workplace. This will in turn go a long way to providing great front line circulation service.

This was an excellent pre-conference. I have participated in and taught customer service classes at my library but I came away with a renewed enthusiasm, along with some great tools, to encourage my staff to establish the best possible customer service culture. The entire group decided that having a good sense of humor and laughing a lot, especially at ourselves would be a key ingredient to giving great Circulation front line service. If you ever have the opportunity to attend a support staff event, please take advantage of it. It will change your outlook and energize you in the workplace.

Susan Hinds

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ALA Midwinter Meeting: People and Places

ALA Mid-
Winter
Exhibit
Hall



Sue Knoche, LSSIRT President



Darlena Davis and Lorelle Swader, ALA Liaisons.



Jim Hill, Jennifer S. Kutzik & Leslie Monsalve-Jones.



Jenifer Grady, ALA-APA Director.



Teri Switzer, ALA Treasurer.

Jordan Scepanski, ALA Council Representative.

ALA Midwinter Meeting: People and Places (cont.)

(L-R) LSSIRT member Susan Hinds, Steering Committee Member-at-Large Carol Thomas, President Sue Knoche, and Member at Large & Membership Chair Nina Manning.



Dinner with Jennifer Kutzik, Teri Switzer & Fran Buckley (ALA Executive Council), and Jim Hill.



LSSIRT Member Dorothy Morgan, John Chrastka (ALA Manager for Membership Development) and Jack Fitzpatrick (Steering Committee Member at Large).



Colleague dinner at Boudros.

**Library Support Staff Interests Round Table
of the American Library Association**

Subscription questions (e.g. missing issues,
address change) should be sent to:

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Newsletter content to:
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**Our mission is to provide an arena within
ALA for programming, communication and
networking for library support staff.**

<http://www.ala.org/lssirt/>

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NOTICE: Last Paper Issue of the LSSIRT Newsletter!

Due to the increasing membership in LSSIRT and the rising costs of paper and postage, this will be the last printed newsletter (with the exception of those members who have no Internet access). The newsletter format will be totally electronic. Anyone requiring a printed copy, please email Editor Kerrie Stramler stramlerk@u.library.arizona.edu so we may accommodate you.

Sign-up for the LSSIRT Members Only E-list.

For timely updates and for networking with LSSIRT colleagues, be sure and sign-up for the very low volume LSSIRT e-list.

To sign-up, send email to Martha Parsons at
parsons@halcyon.com

with your ALA membership number and ask to be subscribed.

