

# Library & Information Technology Association

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2013 ALA Annual Conference

## LITA ANNUAL REPORT

Submitted by Zoe Stewart-Marshall, LITA President  
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### MISSION AND VISION

For the past few years LITA has reworked its mission and conducted strategic planning focused on specific goals and objectives. Utilizing time at the Annual meeting in Anaheim and the Midwinter Meeting in Seattle, the LITA Board has continued its work on revision of the vision statement and discussion of strategies for the future financial stability of LITA. The current vision statement is below:

#### *Vision*

As the center of expertise about information technology, the Library and Information Technology Association (LITA) leads in exploring and enabling new technologies to empower libraries. LITA members use the promise of technology to deliver dynamic library collections and services.

The Board also approved the creation of a Financial Strategies Task Force with the following charge: In light of LITA operating at a deficit for several years, and in light of the current trend of flat or declining membership, which is a significant source of revenue for the Division, the LITA Board believes it is necessary to re-examine existing financial strategies and revenue sources for the Division. The Board seeks to identify strategies based upon a sustainable infrastructure, which will allow LITA to continue to provide valued networking and educational opportunities by and to its members. The Task Force is chaired by LITA Past Presidents Andrew Pace and Thomas Wilson. Other members include: John Blyberg, Colleen Cuddy, Charles Kratz, Dale Poulter, Zoe Stewart-Marshall and Mary Taylor. A final report to the Board is due no later than Midwinter 2014.

### YEAR IN REVIEW

#### Leadership

Under the leadership of ALA President Maureen Sullivan, the Fall ALA Joint Leadership Meeting in Chicago conducted an exercise of reimagining ALA using the appreciative inquiry method. This method starts by listing the things that are valued in an organization and the list was quite long. LITA Executive Committee members were present and participated on behalf of the division. The process was carried over into the LITA Town Meeting, facilitated by Cindi Trainor, held at Midwinter in Seattle. As at the 2012 Town Meeting, virtual participation for LITA members was enabled with both audio and visual streams. The discussion was lively and yielded valuable input for the Board to use in their follow up discussions.

Through the strategic discussions held at the various leadership meetings, the following items were identified as needing work. Most are still in progress:

- Revision of the LITA Vision Statement – draft vision needs to be reviewed by the membership and final version accepted
- ALA Reimagining – discussion on-going
- Review the past Emerging Leaders projects and evaluate which can be acted upon and develop action plans with timelines, action items and deliverables
- Enhance the membership experience – develop a process for a more personalized member <-> leadership/division experience – various suggestions have been discussed with the Membership Development Committee but a clearer action plan is needed
- Facilitate communication within the Division, and between the Board and members –
  - more detailed notes from Executive Committee (ExCo) meetings through reports from the Director-at-Large representative on ExCo to the full board
  - cleared expectations for Board Liaisons related to communicating Board expectations to Committees/IGs and reporting summaries of the work of Committees back to the Board
  - use of Connect whenever possible for virtual asynchronous Board discussions
  - virtual synchronous meetings of the Board between Annual and Midwinter meetings – several were held but more are probably needed. One hour virtual meetings with a limited number of agenda items appeared to be effective. Voting was more effective in the synchronous meetings that using polling in Connect
- Increased participation of Board members in division activities – programming, Forum, etc. – Leading by example
- Begin planning for celebration of LITA's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – need to create a TF
- Review of the LITA Manual and By-Laws – identify what areas need updating – Need a list of recommended areas from Bylaws and Organization, and need Board input on prioritizing the work
- Possibility of a Dues increase – put on hold pending the recommendations of the Financial Strategies TF
- ALA Planned Giving Campaign – how should/could LITA participate – work with Financial Strategies TF on this

This year's Emerging Leaders class was deliberately reduced in size to enhance the experience of the participants. Unfortunately this was done without informing the Divisions before proposals were submitted. LITA submitted two proposals and one was chosen – "Improving orientation and enhancing leadership effectiveness for new Committee and IG Chairs. LITA again sponsored two Emerging Leader slots. This year's LITA emerging leaders were Zach Coble and Margaret Heller. Zach is currently a systems and emerging technologies librarian at Gettysburg College in Gettysburg, PA. Zach is a member of the LITA Publications Committee. Margaret is currently a web services librarian at the Dominican University Library in River Forest, IL. Margaret is a member of the LITA Education Committee and 2013 LITA Forum Planning Committee. Lauren Pressley has mentored them on their project. Cindi Trainor worked with them on leadership opportunities such as assisting with the Town Meeting. Margaret and Zach will present their project proposal at the Monday Board meeting at Annual.

## **Membership**

LITA's membership continues to decline at a faster rate than the decline in overall ALA membership. LITA total membership as of November 2012 was 3,220 compared to 3,356 in November 2011, a 4.05% decrease. The November 2012 total included 2,762 personal memberships, 451 organizational memberships and 7 corporate memberships. The ALA's membership stood at 57,851, a 2.33% decrease from November 2011. In June 2013, LITA membership was down 5.04% from this same time last year and now totals 3,129. ALA membership overall was down 2.62% and now stands at 57,303.

The LITA Board continues to discuss what avenues are available to us to stabilize and increase membership. With the move of ITAL to open access there is a need to redefine what value proposition accrues to corporate/institutional memberships. Discussions at the Board meetings and in the LITA Town meetings have attempted to define what do existing and prospective LITA members perceive as the value associated with a LITA membership. The Financial Strategies Task Force is also looking at what existing and new initiatives should receive priority to reinforce the value of LITA membership.

## **Publications**

LITA Publications continue to be very active under the guidance of Marta Deyrup, Acquisitions Editor, Robert Gerrity, ITAL Editor and the LITA Publications Committee.

## ***LITA Guides***

There was a sharp increase in the number of LITA Guides which have been published. Up from five in 2011, eight new LITA Guides were published between August 2012 and June 2013:

- Managing Electronic Resources, edited by Ryan O. Weir
- Jump-Start Your Career as a Digital Librarian, edited by Jane Monson
- Cloud-Based Services for your Library, by Erik Mitchell

- Using LibGuides to Enhance Library Services, edited by Aaron Dobbs, Ryan Sittler, and, Douglas Cook
- Implementing Virtual Reference Services, edited by Beth C. Thomsett-Scott
- Improving the Visibility and Use of Digital Repositories through SEO, by Kenning Arlitsch and Patrick S. OBrien
- Web Analytics Strategies for Information Professionals, by Tabatha Farney and Nina McHale
- Technology for Small and On-Person Libraries, by Rene J. Erlandson and Rachel A. Erb

The reduction in 2012 was tied to the publication delays resulting from the Neal Schumann/ALA Publishing merger. There are approximately 12 additional titles either in production or still in the process of being written. Marta also noted the development of some guides being spun off into new products. “For example Caitlin A. Bagley is writing a series of posts for ALA on libraries and makerspaces and also a LITA guide with the working title, Makers in the Library: Fostering Creativity and Innovation. Eva Dodsworth, who wrote the LITA guide, Getting Started with GIS, has taught an online course for ALA on the same topic. We are in discussion with Sue Thompson about doing a second edition of her LITA guide, Core Technology Competencies for Librarians and Library Staff, in conjunction with a LLAMA member.”

In keeping with the Board’s desire to support electronic access to content, these Guides are all available as e-books as well as print versions and are available for purchase through the ALA Store. <http://www.alastore.ala.org/SearchResult.aspx?Keywords=lita> Publishing through ALA Techsource reduces overhead to LITA while the LITA branding is maintained.

The Publications Committee continues to look at additional publishing opportunities that can be implemented, both to contribute to the value of a LITA membership as well as the financial health of the division. Areas for future initiatives include: 1) processes for increasing content on the LITA blog, 2) cross division initiatives with other service focused divisions such as RUSA, LLAMA or ALCTS, and/or 3) reviving briefer, timely publications such as TECH SET.

### ***ITAL***

As of the December 2012 issue, Information Technology and Libraries (ITAL), the official publication of LITA, completed its first year of open access publishing. (<http://ejournals.bc.edu/ojs/index.php/ital/index>) While response to this move within the library community has been very positive, the publication is still not revenue neutral, which was an objective of the Board when they voted to make the journal open access. The Board continues to explore options for generating some advertising revenue to offset the remaining e-publication costs. The Board has re-iterated its support for the move to open access and the publication is still perceived as a value associated with LITA membership. The Publications Committee will work with the ITAL Editor and Editorial Board to identify ways to increase the LITA branding and non-monetary benefits to continuing ITAL as a division sponsored publication.

The ITAL Editor reported the following usage statistics as of March 2013: “Readership this year appears to be healthy - the total download count for the thirty three articles published in 2012 was 42,166, with 48,160 abstract views. Unfortunately we don’t have statistics about online use from previous years to compare with. The overall number of article downloads for 2012, for new and archival content, was 74,924.”

### ***Outreach – Social Media – Virtual Participation***

The Web Coordinating Committee completed the re-theming of the LITA Blog <http://litablog.org/> to bring the installation up-to-date and give the blog a fresher look. LITA staff and various committees have made increased use of the LITA Facebook and Twitter accounts to increase the visibility of LITA and LITA sponsored activities to virtual members. We continue to stream the LITA Board Meetings and Top Technology Trends panels via the LITA Ustream account. LITA Interest Groups are moving some meetings fully into virtual reality – for example the LITA Mobile Computing IG had their Midwinter presentations virtually in advance of the Midwinter Meeting <http://connect.ala.org/node/162629> . Other IGs and Committees are making increased use of software such as Skype and Google Groups to increase virtual and hybrid meetings. We will be evaluating the effect of ALA committing to record all programs at ALA Annual in Chicago to see what impact it has on future initiatives to increase virtual participation.

### **Programming**

LITA continued its tradition of strong programming efforts both at Midwinter and Annual. Trying out a new format with a nod to the early days of Top Technology Trends, the Midwinter LITA Top Tech Trends panel discussion addressed a single question, *If Data I Created Resides in a Cloud Environment, Is it Still Mine?* Moderated by Carl Grant, the panelists included Roy Tennant, Bess Sadler, Todd Carpenter, John Law, Mackenzie Smith, and Julie Speer. At Midwinter twenty-four Interest Groups held discussions, and, 19 meetings were scheduled with most of the committee’s participating in the joint meeting (at the same time in the same room). The ever popular LITA Happy Hour overflowed the basement room of the Elephant & Castle. The LITA 201 orientation session was well attended.

Sunday Afternoon with LITA at Annual 2013 is shaping up to be invigorating and enlightening. Top Tech Trends panelists will include: Char Booth, Aimee Fifarek, Sarah Houghton, Clifford Lynch, Gary Price, Moderator: Lorcan Dempsey with an additional possible guest panelist. They will return to the traditional format of a conversation about trends and opportunities in libraries. The LITA President’s Program features digital rights activist, science fiction writer and Boing Boing co-editor, Cory Doctorow with “More Than a Book-Lined Internet Café”. This will be followed by the LITA Happy Hour at the Fado Irish Pub.

Within the new cap imposed by ALA on the number of programs at Annual, LITA has a full contingent of strong programming with more proposals being submitted than the Program

Planning Committee could accept. In addition there are managed discussions being presented by many of the Interest Groups.

## **Continuing Education**

### ***Online learning***

*Building Web Applications with HTML5, CSS3, and Javascript: An Introduction to HTML5* was offered in August 2012 and sold out in November 2012. It was offered again in March 2013. *Getting Started with GIS* by Eva Dodsworth was offered in September 2012 and February/March 2013.

While this is a solid effort, the Board has identified Online Learning as an area where LITA can and should do more. This area is currently the responsibility of the LITA Education Committee. As noted in the section on publications, we are looking at how publications could lead into online learning opportunities. There will be a need to assess how to support authors in transitioning from one format to another.

### ***Pre-Conferences/Workshops***

Midwinter Conference had two workshops: 1) *Building Web Applications with HTML5, CSS3, and Javascript: An Introduction to HTML5* with 18 registered, and, 2) *Developing a Web Analytics Strategy for Your Library: Using Data to Measure Success*, with 20 registered.

LITA is offering three pre-conferences at the Annual Conference in Chicago: 1) *Library Makerspaces: The Field Trip* (sold out with 50 registered), 2) *Introductory Python Workshop* (31 registered to date), and 3) *Library Makerspaces: Participatory Play in the Library* (38 registered)

## **LITA National Forum**

The 2012 LITA Forum attracted 277 participants to Columbus Ohio. The theme was New World of Data: Discover, Connect, Remix. Two preconferences were offered: 1) *Developing a Web Analytics Strategy for Your Library: Using Data to Measure Success*, and, 2) *Everything You Never Wanted to Know about Running Your Systems (And Are Afraid to Ask!)*. Three keynotes were offered: 1) *Building a Public Sector for eBooks*, Eric Hellman, 2) *Fresh Thinking about Information Technology: Visual Analytics, Social Discovery & Networked Communities*, Ben Shneiderman, and, 3) *Library Futures: Star Trek or Starbucks?*, Sarah Houghton. Due to unforeseen circumstances, one of the keynoters, Sarah Houghton, was unable to travel to Columbus and arrangements were made to stream her presentation live. This was successfully accomplished due to the hard work of the LITA Forum Committee members and LITA staff. Thirty-eight concurrent sessions, and, 11 poster sessions completed the Forum programming.

Planning for the 2013 LITA Forum, to be held in Louisville, KY, November 7-10, 2013, is mostly complete. The theme for the Forum is: Creation, Collaboration, Community. The keynoters will be Travis Good, Make Magazine; Nate Hill, Chattanooga Public Library; and Emily Gore, Digital Public Library of America. The Forum Planning Committee received many strong proposals and has chosen a full slate of concurrent sessions and posters. Two pre-conferences are planned.

## **AWARDS**

### ***Hugh C. Atkinson Memorial Award***

Lizabeth (Betsy) A. Wilson, dean of university libraries at the University of Washington

### ***Frederick G. Kilgour Award for Research in Library and Information Technology***

Dr. Barbara Tillett, current chair of the Joint Steering Committee for the Development of Resource Description and Access and a leader internationally in the world of metadata. Dr. Tillett is recognized for her outstanding leadership in library metadata standards, technology integration and international standards in cultural heritage and information institutions. As the chief of the Cataloging Policy and Support Office in the Library of Congress, Dr. Tillett led the work of metadata standards exploration and research for 18 years.

### ***LITA/Ex Libris Student Writing Award***

Karen Doerksen, MLIS degree candidate at the University of Alberta School of Library and Information Studies, for her paper titled "A Sight to Be Held: Adapting Comics and Graphic Novels for Visual Impairment." The paper describes the vital role of graphics and pictures in the development of early literacy and examines the challenge of adapting comics and graphic novels into assistive formats to support the achievement of graphicacy in visually impaired individuals.

### ***LITA/Library Hi Tech Award For Outstanding Communication for Continuing Education in Library and Information Science***

Brewster Kahle, Founder of the Internet Archive (<http://www.archive.org/>)

### ***SemTechBiz Semantic Web.com Spotlight on Innovation Award***

Kevin Ford, Network Development and MARC Standards Office at the Library of Congress was honored for his work with the Bibliographic Framework Initiative (BIBFRAME) and his continuing work on the Library of Congress's Linked Data Services (loc.id)

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

This year's winner of the LITA/Christian Larew Memorial Scholarship (\$3,000) sponsored by Baker & Taylor is Daniel Verbit, who will pursue his studies at The University of Alabama. The LITA/LSSI Minority Scholarship (\$2,500) winner is Elizabeth Tham who will pursue her studies at the University of Illinois at Urbana -Champaign. Lisa Lynn Tyler, the winner of the LITA/OCLC Minority Scholarship (\$3,000), will pursue her studies at the University of Washington.

Criteria for the scholarships include previous academic excellence, evidence of leadership potential and a commitment to a career in library automation and information technology. Two of the scholarships, the LITA/LSSI Minority Scholarship and LITA/OCLC Minority Scholarship, also require U.S. Citizenship and membership in one of four minority groups: American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, African-American, or Hispanic.

#### **LITA BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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