

SNOWSHOE

NEWSLETTER OF THE N.W.T. LIBRARY ASSOCIATION

FALL 1989

Vol. 4 No. 1-2

Editorial: BAD PENNY

After a two year hiatus, the Snowshoe has finally been resurrected. When I left for library school in the fall of 1987 I thought that I had seen the last of my days as editor, yet here I am again.

When I returned to Yellowknife last year, I was full of great plans and high ideals. Several of these have been sacrificed to reality, several more are still alive and well, and some have even come to fruition. I am hoping that the Snowshoe will provide an informal forum where we can exchange views on the issues that we face, and prevent us from getting permanently bogged down in the day to day demands of our positions. It would also be wonderful to receive news from libraries outside Yellowknife. Although this issue of the Snowshoe is a small one, I hope that you will all be moved to submit something for subsequent issues.

Alison Welch
Editor

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NEXT ISSUE OF THE SNOWSHOE

deadline: 1st December, 1989

The theme for the next issue will be automation. I thought that it might be easier for people to write submissions on a particular subject, and this was suggested, so ...
More detailed topics for submissions could include:

- evaluation of a particular system, or a comparison of systems
- which system has been chosen for your library and the criteria used to select it.
- what point you are at in the automation process
- the pitfalls of automation

Of course, submissions relating to any topic (not necessarily automation) will be gratefully received!
Please send them to Alison Welch:

-by mail: NWTLA, P.O. Box 2276
Yellowknife, NT, X1A 2P7

-drop them off at the Renewable Resources Library, Scotia Centre, 5th floor

-or fax them to the Renewable Resources Library at 873-0114

AND NOW A BOOST FOR THE EGO:

Special Librarians are H*O*T*

Working Woman magazine, in the July 1989 issue, ranked special librarian as number 22 out of the 25 hottest careers.



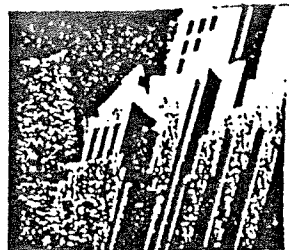
Special librarian

"We are an information-dependent society," says Herbert S. White, dean of the School of Library and Information Science at Indiana University. "As we move from a manufacturing to a service society, we deal less with hardware—more with soft sciences and concepts."

Enter special librarians. No longer do their fingers do the walking through card catalogs alone; these information specialists tap into electronic databases for the latest information to give their corporate employers a decision-making edge.

With dual degrees—usually an MS in library science (or its equivalent), combined with a BA or BS in another discipline—the librarian is increasingly valuable in the business sector. The special librarian provides her employer with sifted, analyzed and packaged "value added" data that serve as the foundation for decisions about new products or competitive strategies.

This information explosion comes at a time when fewer students are enrolling in master of library-science programs and a wave of retirements is hitting the profession. Of the 183,000 librarians identified by the 1980 census, more than 70,000 will have left the field by the year 2000. The 3,500 graduates library schools turn out annually



25 HOTTEST CAREERS

will not meet the demand, says James M. Matarazzo, PhD, professor of library and information science at Simmons College in Boston.

These marketplace forces already have boosted salaries an average of 15 percent, notes David Malinak, director of communications for the Special Libraries Association. (Starting salaries average \$26,000, while mid-level librarians earn \$34,000. Top earners at major corporations can bring in as much as \$80,000.)

—S.C.S.

Las Bibliotecas de Nicaragua

When I finally found library headquarters in Managua last October, and enthusiastically presented myself for my first day of work, I came upon a scene of confusion. Libraries had just been transferred from the Ministry of Culture to the Ministry of Education, so that school and public libraries could be coordinated. The offices had to be moved too, so I arrived to find people walking around carrying filing cabinets and desks, already sweating in the early morning heat. They were expecting me, though. My voluntary service had been arranged by Maryon McClary, a University of Alberta librarian who had spent a sabbatical year working in Nicaragua in 1985-86. When she returned to Edmonton, she helped to organize the Nicaraguan Library Support Group. An article in Feliciter about her experience gave me the idea of going to Nicaragua myself.

So, when I arrived, they escorted me to the Biblioteca Elvis Chavarria, the largest of six public libraries serving Managua's 1 million people, and named, liked everything else in Nicaragua, for one of the "heroes and martyrs" of the revolution. The library was ordinary-looking; the shelves of books, card catalogue, circulation desk, tables and chairs were all there, managed by a staff of five. Closer examination of the shelves, however, revealed that many of the books were not too useful. Not having an acquisitions budget, weeding is unknown. Several feet of shelf space was occupied by a turn-of-the-century encyclopedia set. The only new books the library had received in recent years had come from support groups in Europe and Canada and from the proceeds of a fun fair put on by library staff.

During my first week there, I went out every day with the bibliobus or bookmobile. The bibliobus had been purchased by a group of German librarians. It was managed by the driver, Don Ramon, and by Adela, a woman of about my age and the mother of six. Our destinations were several minimum security prison farms close to the city. The prisoners were model library patrons, although many of their requests for vocational-type materials could not be filled.

The most capable member of the staff was Marina who ran the children's area. Marina was 22 years old and had no library training, but was very good with the kids. She showed movies, did storytelling programs at the library and at a nearby daycare centre, and did craft programs when she had the materials. She also lent books, one at a time, to children she got to know. The books in the children's area were well used all day by children who didn't go to school, and the place was swamped in the afternoon. At 4pm the library closed and Marina gathered her textbooks and went to school herself.



Things were less lively on the adult side, where patrons were not allowed to borrow books or even browse among the shelves. The staff on this side had more of the custodian mentality whereby the patron is the enemy who might soil or steal the precious book. None of the staff had any formal library training, so I taught Adela, Marina and the boss, Maria Ester, some simplified Dewey classification. I helped process some new children's books which had arrived courtesy of a group in Sweden, and typed the catalogue cards on the backs of used cards from Germany.

Actually, the main concern of the library staff at this time was inflation. Prices were shooting up from one day to the next. By the time I left, Maria Ester's monthly salary was worth less than \$5 US, and wouldn't have bought enough food to survive on had it not been supplemented by the small ration of rice, beans and sugar which all government workers receive. Given the difficult personal circumstances that all the staff were in, I was impressed by the absence of theft.

By this time, I had met some people at the National Library and decided to go to work there. It had the attraction of being a 20 minute walk from my house, much preferable to squeezing my sweaty body in with a hundred others on a horrendously crowded bus. The National Library is housed in a substantial building right beside the huge Roberto Huembes Market and the Museum of the Revolution. It has far more books and staff than the small public libraries, but is far from what one might expect in a national institution. The technical services team was led by Yadira, a very pleasant and conscientious woman. Yadira was a trained librarian and part of her education had been a trip to the Soviet Union. What impressed her most there was the people she saw reading in the parks and subways. She saw this reading habitat as something to work towards in Nicaragua. Yadira and other educated Nicaraguans left their jobs for five months in 1980 to join literacy brigades. Sharing the poor living conditions and isolation of the people in mountain villages was a new experience for the university students and professionals like Yadira who went out as teachers. Half of Nicaragua's people were illiterate until the Sandinista government sponsored this massive campaign, which won U.N. recognition as the most successful of its kind. Construction of schools in rural areas has also been a government priority. The reality is that most people don't have money to buy books, which increases the importance of libraries.

The rest of the technical services staff were library school students. They worked from 8 to 2, went home for lunch and then attended classes. It takes six years to complete the program. Since most Nicaraguan women in their 20s have children and are apt to be single parents, it takes a lot of stamina to finish.

Yadira put me to work immediately, checking the cataloguing done by the students and typing catalogue cards. People at both the Elvis Chavarria Library and the National Library were very friendly and appreciative of my help with their work, Yet it was obvious both to them and to me that being there was mainly an educational experience for me and that I could really start helping them after I got home. What they need is more books.

The staff, though poorly paid, is adequate to handle the small amount of materials they have.

The Alberta librarians who form the Nicaraguan Library Support Group have an excellent working relationship with Nicaraguan librarians. Through personal contacts they know which individuals can really get things done and those are the people they are dealing with. The Nicaraguan government has demonstrated its support for literacy and libraries, but just does not have the money to fund them adequately when other urgent needs like hospitals and clean water cannot be met. So far the Nicaraguan Library Support Group has purchased Subject Heading books, helped construct a small building to house the library school and sent 4,000 children's books to public libraries. The Books for Children project is ongoing. Donations will be matched by CIDA grants and are tax deductible!

If you want to know more about my trip or about the Nicaraguan Library Support Group, please write or call:
Cynthia Brown, c/o Yellowknife Public Library, Box 694,
Yellowknife, NWT, X1A 2N5 873-5980.

I wish to donate to the Nicaraguan Library Support Group

\$10 \$25 \$50 other \$ _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ PROVINCE _____ POSTAL CODE _____

Please make your cheque payable to
Change for Children -- Library Project
and send it to:

Nicaraguan Library Support Group
1901, 11135 - 83 Ave.
Edmonton Alberta
T6G 2C6



Recent Acquisitions in the Field
of Library and Information Science
at the National Library

- Designing instruction for library users : a practical guide.
Marilla D. Svinicki, Barbara A. Schwartz. New York : M.
Dekker, c1988. Z675 U5 S935 1988
- Directory of telefacsimile sites in libraries in the United
States and Canada. C. Lee Jones, editor. 3rd edition.
Buchanan Dam, Texas : CBR Consulting Services, Inc., c1987.
Z674 .3 J66 1987
- Equality in librarianship : rights and recourses for Ontario
women. Ontario Library Association, Women's Issues Guild.
Toronto : Women's Issues Guild, Ontario Library Association,
1987.
- Information profession : facing future challenges : papers
presented at the State-of-the-Art Institute, November 4-6,
1987, Washington, D.C. Washington, D.C. : Special Libraries
Association, 1988. Z665 S776 1987
- Investigation of fee-based library services in Canadian special
libraries. Mun-Jung Lim. Edmonton : [s.n.], 1988.
Z675 A2 L55 1988
- Library boss : thoughts on library personnel. Robert S. Alvarez.
San Francisco, CA : Administrator's Digest Press, c1987.
Z682 A47 1987
- Managing libraries in transition. Jennifer Cargill and Gisela M.
Webb. Phoenix : Oryx Press, 1988. Z678 C29 1988
- Marketing the modern information center : a guide to
intrapreneurship for the information manager. Janet
Schmidt, edited by Judith E. Margolin. [New York] :
Find/SVP, c1987. Z674 .4 S36 1987
- Networking : choosing a LAN path to interconnection. Marlyn
Kemper. Metuchen, N.J. : Scarecrow Press, 1987.
Z674 .8 K44 1987
- Staff training : a librarian's handbook. Margaret Blanksby.
Newcastle-under-Lyme [England] : AAL Publishing, 1988.
Z668 B57 1988
- World directory of biological and medical sciences libraries.
Ursula H. Poland. Munchen : K.G. Saur, 1988. (IFLA
publications, 42) Z675 M4 W67 1988

Library Staff

Several changes have taken place in the Court Library. Monica Welch, Librarian, and Joyce Bryan, Library Technician, both retired this summer. Monica has moved to Lantzville, a small community just north of Nanaimo on Vancouver Island, B.C. Joyce will be travelling for a year before choosing a place to live. Sue Baer will be moving from the NWT Department of Health to take over as Court Librarian in November. Bev Speight, the Library Technician before Joyce, was back working in the Court Library for the summer, before returning to university.

There have also been two moves from Public Library Services in Hay River. Sara Lochhead, formerly Headquarters Librarian, has moved to Cranbrook, B.C. to become Manager of the Learning Resources Centre, East Kootenay Community College. Louise Frechette has moved from her post as Language Services Librarian to Quebec.

Catherine Martin, who was working in the Language Bureau Resource Centre, is now a Research Officer with the NWT Housing Corporation.

Carol Melton moved from a casual position in the Government Library to become the part time Library Technician for the NWT Department of Social Services. In this role, she may be found in the Dr. Otto Schaefer Health Resource Centre. Another person who will soon be missing from Health is Marni McDonald. Marni is moving to the Public Works Library to take over from Janet Diveky who has gone back to teaching.

The NWTLA lost their secretary and the Archives Library a librarian when Anne Verkerk moved to Whitehorse.

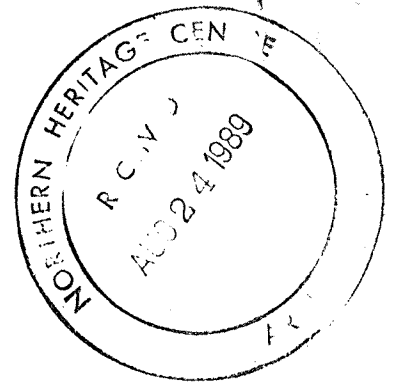
Please send information about staff changes or any interesting happenings to: Alison Welch, NWT Library Association, P.O. Box 2276, Yellowknife, NT, X1A 2P7





Canadian Library Association

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August 16, 1989

Department of Personnel
Government of the N.W.T.
Iqaluit
N.W.T.
XOA OHO

Dear Sir:

An advertisement for "Iqaluit Local Librarian" which appeared in News North, May 23, 1989 has been brought to my attention.

While the advertisement does not spell out the duties of the position it would appear that you were seeking a library clerk. A person with the "librarian" designation generally has attained the Master of Library Science post graduate degree, or its equivalent.

Enclosed, for your information, is a pamphlet produced by the Canadian Association of Special Libraries, a CLA Division, which may be helpful to you when you are drafting copy for future positions in the libraries of the Northwest Territories. Also enclosed is promotional material for a recent CLA publication which may be useful to you.

Sincerely

Jane Cooney
Executive Director

