their role as information providers for data files, they will be grappling with many of the same issues highlighted in the program. The conference provided a forum for IASSIST members and other presenters to share their expertise and visions for dealing with acquisition and access issues, technical and administrative issues, as well as with providing reference services for data files.

The practical librarian: Managing collections and services in the college library

By Sandra Upchurch

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A report on a conference on small college libraries.

The Practical Librarian: Managing Collections and Services in the College Library was the theme of a conference held at Maryville College, Maryville, Tennessee, May 31–June 2, 1990. Co-sponsored by the Lamar Memorial Library at Maryville College, and the University of Tennessee, Knoxville’s Graduate School of Library and Information Science, the conference was designed for college librarians serving student enrollments under 2,000. Sessions focused on the environment of higher education in the 1990s, the role of the college library, collection and service issues, and support for the library on campus. The tranquil Maryville College campus, in the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains, provided a relaxed environment that encouraged interaction and idea-sharing among the 48 participants.

To facilitate discussion, William C. Robinson (UTK Graduate School) developed a composite profile of 22 libraries based on a questionnaire. The average conference participant had been at his or her library for 11.4 years; the average library represented held 129,545 volumes and had a book budget of $82,676. The library was open 82.7 hours per week with four professional librarians and four FTE support staff. Automation activities in the average library included acquisitions, online searching, and cataloging functions. Most libraries used LC classification. Fifty-nine (59) percent of the libraries have a separate reference service point, staffed an average of 50.5 hours per week, and staffed by professionals 41.7 hours per week. The average library provided bibliographic instruction as part of freshman English and subject-oriented instruction at the junior level.

Ingram Book Services hosted a splendid reception at Willard House, formerly a presidential home on campus, and at the opening banquet Tom
Tom Watson offers his insights on trends in higher education.

Watson (once director of the library and now vice-president for university relations), University of the South, identified trends in higher education in the 1990s:

- more change in the next ten years than in the last thirty;
- trustees and members of college boards of directors will seek to apply business analogies to education; most will not have experience managing institutions in decline;
- the American public's faith in education as a solution to social and economic problems will continue to diminish;
- faculty do not understand that resources are increasingly limited;
- it will be more and more difficult to fill teaching faculty and professional librarian positions.

A special aspect of this conference was the diverse array of experiences offered. The traditional lecture format was interspersed with discussions and hands-on experiences. Among the several speakers featured were Lynn Blair, Rhodes College; Evan Farber, Earlham College; Billy Pennington, Birmingham Southern College; and William Robinson (UTK). Focus groups and panels addressed collection and service issues. "Case Studies: How Do You Manage?" featured panelists Blair, Farber, Jim Parks (Millsaps College), and Willa Reister (Area Resource Center, Knox County Public Library), who presented hypothetical library management scenarios to which the audience responded. This session resulted in some excellent problem-solving and interchange among the conference.

Robinson's overview of collection management focused on collecting items for present, rather than anticipated, use. He emphasized that, while library schools and library literature tend to stress collection development, most college librarians will need to develop "used, useful, and usable" collections by focusing on collection management. Conservation is mainly a function of research collections, he said. He encouraged librarians to evaluate their collections in small subject units and continuously revise holdings through careful weeding as well as good selection.

Evan Farber's "The College Library: Challenges and Innovations" was another highlight; he shared with the group his perceptions of the advantages of life as a small college librarian, drawing heavily on his own professional life and experiences. Among the advantages cited were the opportunity to be a generalist, to work more closely with students and faculty in non-traditional ways, and to have a meaningful impact in the administration of the institution.

In "Managing Services: An Overview," Billy Pennington discussed planning library services in the college: cooperation, communication, and creativity are keys to improving service management. He included ideas drawn from his experience in setting goals and evaluating services.

Lynn Blair outlined for the conference her experiences developing support for new library technologies such as CD-ROM at Rhodes in "Building Campus Support." Dean Boldon, academic vice-president, Maryville College; Jean Hutton, Warren Wilson College; and Michael LaCroix, Wingate College, participated in a panel discussion, "Lonely at the Top," on library and leadership isolation on campus.

Perhaps the most unusual conference event was the Paper Olympics, an exchange of library forms, handouts, and policy statements. Libraries competed in the BI-Reference Relay (class handouts, bibliographies, etc.), the Long-Shot Put (public relations materials), the High Hurdles (policy statements, self-studies, annual reports, etc.), and the Formathon (forms, forms, and forms). Ingram Book Services provided sherry for the non-traditional track meet, held in the library, and ACRL donated CLIP notes for prizes. A grand-prize winner received a subscription to Reviews-on-cards from Choice magazine.

A fine conference ended with participants sharing an excellent meal of traditional East Tennessee cooking in a rustic old inn at Elkmont, in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, provided by Faxon and Turner Subscription Services. It was a "classy" ending to a very practical conference.

Editor's note: College librarians interested in hosting the Practical Librarian in 1991 should contact: William C. Robinson, University of Tennessee, CSLIS, 804 Volunteer Rd., Knoxville, TN 37996, (615) 974-7918, or Joan Worley, Lamar Memorial Library, Maryville College, Maryville, TN 37801, (615) 981-8257.
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