From The President

We librarians are living in proverbial "interesting times."

American Libraries (December, 2007) notes in "Top 10 Library Stories of 2007" that financial uncertainty was *the* prevalent concern in the library community. School and public libraries have endured "massive cutbacks" (44). Academic libraries are suffering slashed or frozen budget lines. Privatization in all sectors of librarianship – from elementary schools to government agencies – raises concerns regarding standards of services for patrons and the preservation of wages and benefits for library staff and professionals.

In the same article, *AL* notes that these threats to our profession are being met nationwide with "outpourings of public support."

We are also fortunate in that librarians, as a group, are collegial, supportive, and rally to each others support. In response to scarce travel funds, LIRT has been exploring increased virtual participation at conference, as well as sponsoring new professionals through ALA's Emerging Leaders program and investigating ways to incorporate retirees who wish to remain professionally active.

In these "interesting times," what can LIRT do to serve you better and address your concerns?
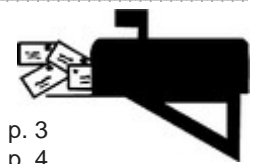
LIRT officers are in the process of long-range planning, examining our mission, goals, and objectives. Ideas, complaints, and suggestions are welcome and will be incorporated into discussions at Annual in Anaheim. My contact information is below.

All the best!
Vibiana Bowman

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http://www.baylor.edu/LIRT/lirtnews/

WILLIAMS, LISA. **Degrees and Certificates:** University of North Carolina Wilmington, MALS, 2007; North Carolina Central University, MLS, 1999; East Carolina University, BS, 1992. **Current Position:** University of North Carolina Wilmington, Randall Library, Librarian 2001-present. **Previous Position:** University of South Carolina Spartanburg, Librarian, 2000-2001; East Carolina University, Joyner Library, Temporary Faculty/Graduate Assistant 1997-1999. **ALA Activities**: LIRT Teaching, Learning & Technology Committee 2003-present; ACRL Status of Academic Librarians 2003-present; RUSA RSS Cooperative Reference Committee 2008-present. **Partial List of Publications:** Fritzler, P., Palmer, L., & Williams, L. (2006). The future has sent you a message: Will you accept? *2006 UNC TLT Conference Proceedings.* Presented at the 2006 UNC Teaching and Learning with Technology Conference. (pp. 24-30). Pemberton, A., & Williams, L. (2006). Engaging Students: Using Technology in the Library Classroom. In (Eds.), *Discover, Connect, Engage: Creative Integration of Information Literacy.* Papers and session materials presented at the 33rd National LOEX Library Instruction Confer-

From the Editor
by Jeff Knapp

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Greetings everyone! I'm feeling old—about a hundred years old, to be exact. A student came to me the other day at the reference desk needing help finding a book. She had the call number written down of a book she found in our catalog. When I walked her over to the shelf and found the book, she looked at it and said, "Oh . . . but it's, like, a hundred years old." On the call number label was its year of publication: 1967. (Sigh.) Enough said . . .

This Worked!
By Elana Karshmer

LIRT Program: Energize Your Instruction: Keep the Magic Alive for You and your Audience
By Victor D. Baeza

Is your instruction dull and lifeless? Do you have students drooling on their keyboards? Are you and your audience equally bored? Even if the answer to these questions is no, you'll want to join speaker Andrew Sanderbeck at LIRT's ALA Annual program to discover how to avoid getting into a rut and put the pizzazz back into your teaching. Keeping that spark and passion alive in those who teach is critical to a successful learning process. That's why this program will focus on proven techniques that help employees avoid and overcome the symptoms of "teaching burnout" and will give participants the tools to rediscover the best potential in themselves and others.

Adult Learners Committee
Ted Chaffin, Chair

The Chair provided an overview of the LIRT Steering Committee meeting which included the 2009 Budget, the ALA endowment totaling almost $50,000, and a speech from incoming President Jim Redding.

Several announcements were made including a need for volunteers to actively recruit new LIRT members, a reviewing of the planning team leadership, and subdivisions of the planning team leadership, and also the issue. 2za(movegaLIRT new53)Tj .002 Tc -0.0965 Tw 0 to ree ansTw T*con
deadlines for forthcoming LIRT news.

The committee began planning for the 2008 Mid-ng atrommrdhing. ettee begaLIRT news.
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In 1999, LIRT published *Presentation Skills*, a brochure that covers the basics of giving presentations. It also works well as a guide for teachers looking to improve their classroom teaching performance. I distribute the brochure every time workshops on the topic. The brochure includes a brief bibliography of works related to teaching and presenting. After doing a little of my own research, I discovered that the concept is a slippery one: items usually address either the holistic evaluation of a teacher's performance, or the teaching of performance to actors, usually in a theatre/stage context. I added those works that actually do address performance skills for classroom teaching to the original bibliography. (There is one more that may be added in the future: Cox, Christopher N. and Elizabeth Blakesley Lindsay, eds. *Information Literacy Instruction Handbook*. Chicago: ACRL, in press 2008.)

The bibliography below is my update of the 1999 LIRT effort.

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table to help patrons by designing, teaching, or answering

Candidates for LIRT Positions, 2008 (cont'd)

Candidates for LIRT Secretary

HOPKINS, BARBARA. Current Position: School Librarian, Jordan School District, Fort Herriman Middle School, Salt Lake City, UT. **Previous Position:** Circulation Librarian, Utah Valley State College (managed staff of 35, taught classes, and provided reference services). **ALA Activities**: LIRT Conference Planning Chair. **Offices Held outside of ALA:** Utah Library Association's Library Administration and Management

Non-LIRT Meetings at Midwinter (cont'd)

(Re)thinking Subject Guides: Interactivity Unbound
ACRL WSS Discussion Group

The moderator, Diana King (UCLA), began by discussing trends in subject guides. These trends include using blogs, wikis, Meebo, outside sources like LibGuides, and YouTube tutorials. When opened to the floor, the first discussion was about using the social bookmarking site del.icio.us. You can keep one list of guides and tag it so you can have a tag cloud for, say, "English 301." However, it's rather ugly and doesn't allow for applying a library "brand" to it. Similarly, FURL is ugly and not customizable. Another participant felt that course management software was an effective location for subject guides. Institutional portals allow for multiple channels and offer the opportunity to "push" information to specific patrons, for example, biology majors. Portals were also discussed as a way to allow patrons to customize their own subject-guides. In-browser toolbars are another way to get subject guides to patrons, but downloading the toolbar seems to be a barrier to usage. The discussion then turned to wikis. Some felt that it was difficult to get students to use wiki subject guides because we train them not to use Wikipedia; they seem unable to separate the format from the content. Wikis were also discussed as a shared tool between librarians, faculty, and students. Participants tended to like wikis because they find them very easy to update and users are familiar with the format. Many participants lauded the LibGuides software as an excellent way to publish subject guides. *—Russ Hall, LIRT Liaison Committee*

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Dear Tech Talk: I've heard colleagues talking about "learning commons." Is this just one more synonym for "information commons" or is it something different? —*Limited Comprehension of Learning Commons*

Dear LCLC: Synonyms abound for the concept of an information commons, including the use of "learning commons." However a true "learning commons" goes well beyond the expectations we have historically associated with "information commons."

A brief review of the literature identifies a number of authors who have defined the differences between learning commons and information commons (Bennett, Roberts, Schmidt, Spencer, and Sinclair). However all of the definitions contain similar key concepts for a learning commons:

· Collaborative: Both a collaborative learning environment and collaboration with other entities within the institution: the library, technology services, writing centers, tutorial services, student affairs, centers for teaching and learning, etc.;

· Student centric: Today's students (Millennials) have study and research habits that differ significantly from their predecessors and learning commons focus on meeting students' expectation related to these habits;

· Supportive of mobility: Wireless capabilities and sufficient access to power to support student's personal devices;

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http://www3.baylor.edu/LIRT/

explored students' research lives from multiple perspectives. Even though this landmark work is focused on undergraduates at a specific institution and the results are not necessarily universally applicable, this research provides:

€ significant insight into the academic lives of Millennials;

€ a good, concise analysis of Millennials and how and why they differ so much from previous generations; and

€ a fascinating array of survey techniques and activities—many of which could be replicated by others, even without the assistance of an anthropologist.

So, what might a learning commons look like? Ideally, it is a very, large open room. It's warm, light, and inviting, preferably with a source of natural light, as well as artificial light. Flat screen monitors are prominent, displaying examples of digital projects or promoting a variety of activities when the monitors are not being used. Many of the room divisions are created through the use of furniture (all on wheels): clusters of high-backed chairs surrounding circular work tables to create semi-private collaborative work spaces; pods of workstations that support the production of sophisticated multimedia projects; and pockets of various forms of soft seating for those who want to socialize, relax, or study individually.

Additional learning spaces would include glassed-in group study rooms equipped with flat screen monitors that can be used with software like TeamSpot (http://www.tidebreak.com/), enabling multiple laptops simultaneous access to the displayed project, as well as a larger glassed-in group instruction room with tables and chairs on wheels to enable on-the-fly room reconfiguration and robust support for laptops.

The learning commons has a service area staffed with an array of student employees and library and information technology staff who work collaboratively to assist the students with the creation of their knowledge objects. Moreover, space is also provided for services traditionally obtained from writing or tutoring centers. Perhaps this area also houses a center for teaching and learning which facilitates instructors' ability to incorporate new instructional technologies and learning activities into their teaching. Lastly, space adjacent to the learning commons will provide access to the libraries' coffee shop, which is now part and parcel of a library environment.

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Yes, learning commons are different than information commons, and yes, moving toward a learning commons environment may require a paradigm shift for those who still revere the traditional library. However, learning commons and traditional library do not need to be mutually exclusive concepts. To this end, libraries have already made significant changes in order to evolve from the information commons environment to the learning commons environment:

· Brigham Young University – http://net.lib.byu.edu/gen/ic/

· California Polytechnic State University – http://learningcommons.lib.calpoly.edu

· Dalhousie University – http://www.library.dal.ca/commons

· Emory University – http://www.cet.emory.edu/cox/index.cfm

· Georgia State University – http://www.library.gsu.edu/learningcommons/pages.asp?ldID=108&guideID=0&ID=4657

· North Carolina State University – http://www.lib.ncsu.edu/learningcommons/

· Ohio University – http://www.cni.org/tfms/2004b.fall/abstracts/handouts/CNI_learning_stuart.pdf

· Tompkins Cortland Community College (TC3) – http://www.tc3.edu/news/default.asp?Category=5#3738

· University of Colorado, Boulder – http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/learningcommons/

· University of Illinois – http://www.library.uiuc.edu./ugl/lc/more.html

· University of Massachusetts, Amherst – http://www.umass.edu/learningcommons/

· University of Guelph – http://www.learningcommons.uoguelph.ca

· University of Texas, Austin – http://www.utexas.edu/oncampus/2007/10/18/ufcu-feature/

· University of Oregon – http://libweb.uoregon.edu/commons

· Yale University – http://net.lib.byu.edu/gen/ic/

Have you created an instruction program or developed a unique classroom strategy?

Please share your experiences with LIRT.

**S**end your articles to Jeff Knapp (   )

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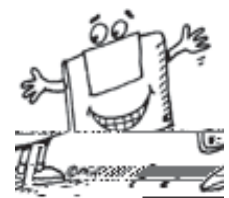
STANDING COMMITTEES

Adult Learners

This committee is charged with assisting library professionals to more effectively serve adult learners.

Conference Program

This committee shall be responsible for annual program preparation and presentation.

Liaison

This committee shall initiate and maintain communication with groups within the American Library Association dealing with issues relevant to library instruction and shall disseminate information about these groups' activities.

Membership

This committee shall be responsible for publicizing the Round Table's purposes, activities and image; and for promoting membership in the Round Table.

Newsletter

The committee shall be responsible for soliciting articles, and preparing and distributing LIRT News

Organization and Planning

This committee shall be responsible for long-range planning and making recommendations to guide the future direction of LIRT.

Research

The committee will identify, review, and disseminate information about in-depth state-of-the-art research about library instruction for all types of libraries.

Teaching, Learning, and Technology

This committee will be responsible for identifying and promoting the use of technology in library instruction.

Top 20

This committee shall be responsible for monitoring the library instruction literature and identifying high quality library-instruction related articles from all types of libraries.

Transitions to College

This committee builds and supports partnerships between school, public, and academic librarians to assist students in their transition to the academic library environment.

Web Advisory

This committee shall provide oversight and overall direction for the LIRT Web site.

Please see our online committee volunteer form at

http://www3.baylor.edu/LIRT/volform.html

Library Instruction Round Table News
c/o Lorelle Swader
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