



Rural Library Service Newsletter



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New Roles for Rural Librarians Proposed at World Conference

"Public Library Service for All: How to Serve Rural Areas," was an International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA) pre-session seminar held in Chicago on August 11-16. Representatives from over twenty countries including four librarians from the United States participated in the IFLA rural libraries event held on the Chicago campus of the University of Illinois.

Gerald Sophar, National Commission on Libraries and Information Science, Washington, D.C.; John Philip, State Library of Ohio, Columbus, Ohio; Donna Leicht, Shawnee Library System, Carterville, Illinois, and John Christenson, Traverse des Sioux Library System, Mankato, Minnesota, were the four "Americans" invited to the seminar. Other countries represented included Brazil, Netherlands, Colombia, Uruguay, England, Peru, Chile, Mexico, Japan, Venezuela, Finland, Ecuador, Cameroon, Bolivia, France, Corsica, Nicaragua, Trinidad, Thailand, Spain, Kenya, and Cuba.

As usual with a group of rural service librarians, there were many discussions aimed at defining "rural". Teresa Navellian Fernandez, National Coordinator of Public Libraries for Chile, said that in her country the definition of rural is "Anywhere the natural landscape predominates, or where people make a living from natural products."

Anyplace without running water is considered to be rural in Cuba according to Marta Terry of the Cuban public library services. She also defined popular library materials as "literature of the moment". Mitsi Westphal Taylor, Coordinator of the State of Santa Catarina Library Services, Florianopolis, Brazil, defined rural as any area outside of the urban limits of the cities. There was

also a considerable discussion about "marginally urban" library service that was made difficult because of language translation interpretations. Eventually service to the "marginally urban" population was defined to be a part of rural library service because it is service to rural people who have recently migrated to the large urban areas.

The majority of the international rural library participants spoke Spanish, English, Portuguese or French. Two translators utilizing a closed booth, microphones, and headsets for everyone resolved most language problems. Many of the Spanish speaking Latin Americans understood some English, some of the Americans understood Spanish, and the Africans, the Finn, Leena Siitonen, and the Parisian, Genevieve Patte, were



Rosa Fernandez de Zamora, National Public Library Service of Mexico, and Teresa Navellian Fernandez, National Coordinator Public Libraries in Chile, on the bus trip to Starved Rock Library System in rural ILL.

fluent in English. The Portuguese of Emir Suaiden, President of the Federal District Library Association in Brasilia, Brazil, was the butt of good natured jokes by some of his Spanish speaking neighbors. He humorously commented at the Thursday night banquet that he never knew until this conference that Portuguese was just bad Spanish!

Alvaro Agudo, Branco del Libro, Caracas, Venezuela, delivered a challenging conference keynote address on "Public Library Services for Popular Areas in Latin America." He explained that rural libraries in Latin America were new, ongoing experiments, or models, of what should be happening sometime in the future. Agudo urged the participants to think of a "popular" library that would go beyond the bounds of the traditional public library the better to serve the rural, marginally urban, and ethnic minority sectors of the population. "Four general functions of the popular library would be to promote reading; provide information; serve as a facilitator for the organization of the community; and to serve as a mediator with other programs of economic, social and cultural attention. The first two functions are inherent to the library; the other two functions convert it into an active community center."



On the left, a library trustee from the Seneca Illinois Public Library talking to Max Brome, County Librarian, Hertford, Hertfordshire, England, & Leena Siitonen, a Finnish librarian teaching at the University of Rhode Island.

The popular library would be multifaceted, with flexible personnel who would wear many hats: as a librarian, childrens' activities leader, adult cultural leader, researcher, and social worker. In addition to traditional printed and non-printed materials the collection would include a/v and "homemade pamphlets" which record oral traditions, and also civic and community materials. The popular library would be an active member of networks and systems of social services as well as library support groups.

One of the organizers of the IFLA pre-session seminar was Rosario Gassol de Horowitz, Simon Bolivar University, Caracas, Venezuela. Her paper on "Librarianship and Social Change in Latin America", was an intriguing counterpoint to Agudo's concept of the heterogeneous "bibliotecarios populares". She sees the librarian as a change agent in underdeveloped societies. There are persistent calls for a new type of information specialist who would go into rural communities, jails, hospitals, factories, and deprived urban sectors, and function as a coordinator (catalyzer) of information needs. "Variously called a pioneering librarian," "bare-footed librarian," or "library corpsman." This generalist would integrate different information into a single combined effort targeted at a particular group of users.

There is a need "for a new type of professional and for a bold and non-traditional library service which cuts across the compartmentalization, imposed by tradition and organizations, to meet the circumstances and conditions in which people find themselves," according to Horowitz.

The problems of finding suitable library materials for the Indigenas (Indians) in their native languages was the subject of several papers including Emir Suaiden's "La situacion de emigrante y del indigena en al Brazil." Johnny Omonte of Boliva displayed posters and small paperback books written in Quechua, the old language of the Incas, and Carmen Checa de Silva, Director of Public Libraries of the National Library of Peru, lamented that she hardly had anything more

than pamphlets on bee keeping and potatoes for the Peruvian Indigenas. Her slides of library workers carrying canvas sacks of books on their backs up to the villages in the high Andes were breathtaking.

As Peter Chateh, University Librarian, Cameroon, Africa, said, "It is rather strange that we should be discussing here in Chicago on public libraries serving rural communities." To combat this strangeness, a bus trip out to rural library members of the Starved Rock Library System headquartered in Ottawa, ILL. was scheduled.

The bus stopped in front of the attractive Seneca Public Library in the thriving agricultural town of 2,000 on the first leg of the "rural excursion". The door of the building was locked, and the thirty conference participants milled around until it was discovered that a reception was awaiting the international group at the Seneca High School. The library board, librarians, system director, school officials, and the county extension agent entertained and informed the group with speeches, cookies, coffee and voluminous information packets full of interesting items about the town, and library and agriculture.

In the next town, Peru, population 10,000, the old library and a new functional soon-to-be finished library were visited, and then the rural specialists returned to the very urban campus of "I.U. in Chicago," or "Harvard on Halstead," as some T-shirts proclaimed.

"Of all the conferences that I've attended in twenty years of librarianship this IFLA rural library seminar was one of the most interesting," said Christenson. "I know it's a cliché, but until you tour another country, or talk to people struggling with causes in developing countries, you really don't have a full appreciation of the United States. Our problems with funding, local and state government, and getting quality library service to rural areas are minute compared to our neighbors to the

south and to African and Asiatic librarians. In Colombia 90% of the population did not know what a public library was, and then in one year 70 book mobiles (33 bibliobuses and 27 bibliojeeps) were acquired and dispatched to rural areas. In Ecuador, the major library difficulty is that they don't circulate their books -- what problems do we have that can begin to compare with those?"

BY:

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Mankato, Minnesota



Rural Library Service Newsletter

Editor: John M. Houlahan

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Hundreds Gather at ALA Rural Meetings

The big show was the Outhouse/Inhouse Non-Professional Staff Development and Training. Paul Deane, program chair for PLA/SMLS Rural Library Service Committee headed up the right topic as over 300 attended a program in which only 150 had been expected. The oversize crowd quickly snatched up the handouts leaving many without copies of the resource lists and bibliographies.

Two of the most popular handouts were the Selected Resources an annotated bibliography on staff development programs and Local Program Resource Contacts a description of local, regional, statewide and national programs and the identification of contact people. Additional copies of these handouts can be attained by writing to Brenda Pacey, Lincoln Trails Libraries System, 1704 West Interstate Drive, Champaign, Illinois 61821.

Following the keynote address on Business and Ready Reference Staff Development Materials and Videotapes by Sue Gallagher of the Tacoma Public Library, the 300 membered audience headed went to discussion groups: Self Training Manuals on Self Assessment and Collection Development by Sue Mahmoodi, Minnesota State Department of Education; Statewide Annual Library Skills Institute by Shirley A. Smith, West Virginia Library Commission; Reference Communication Skills Training by Mancy Bolin, Maryland State Department of Education; Regionally Coordinated Library Associate Certification Program with Nabia Taran and Libraries Improve from Training, Jane Bryan of Pasagoula, Mississippi.

While the topics were interesting & the handouts helpful, the large crowd did not lend itself well to a few small discussion groups.

The Rural Library Service Committee met at the Conference on the morning of July 9th. Twenty-three committee members and visitors reviewed the rural program held earlier in the conference, announced major appointments

and discussed future program ideas. John Christenson reported he has completed most of his work on "Rural Roots" a day long program on rural service to be held in April '86 at the Public Library Association Conference in St. Louis. Lorretta Flowers continues the establishment of a network of librarians in all 50 states. They are to be conduits of information to and from the national library community to the grassroots practioners. Brenda Pacey, new committee chair, is working on plans for a hospitality suite at the 1986 annual conference in New York. Susan Whittle heads the work on developing a national rural library survey.



Brenda Pacey, (l) new SMLA Rural Library Service chair makes notes while Danny Hales (r) outgoing chair, directs his final committee meeting at Chicago's ALA.

Gerry Sophar of the NCLIS/USDA was the principle speaker at the first summer meeting of the Rural Library Cooperative Discussion Group, an Adhoc group under the auspices of ALA's/ASCLA.

Gerry has been a leading force in attempting to create a National Advisory Board in the Department of Agriculture on rural information needs. He believes overseeing rural information needs can be best done by the USDA rather than library governing agencies because an advisory board in the Department of Agriculture by tradition is stable, has power and is not ignored.

Sophar's insights into the workings of the political processes in Washington was

fascinating and informative. He said information systems that are useful to the public will receive support and be listened to by Congress. Systems that are self serving & are designed to meet the needs of a profession over those of society as a whole will not receive Congressional support. He looks for an advisory committee of 20 members representing a broad cross section of information providers and users under the USDA to help set a national agenda on rural information needs. If the advisory committee is accepted by the USDA, it may well be the major focal point for national rural information issues and concerns.



Gerry Sophar, Administrator, Federal/Local Community Information Programs, NCLIS speaks at ALA about the joint projects of NCLIS and USDA at the first summer meeting of the Rural Library Cooperatives Discussion Group.

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LIBRARY CALLS FOWL

The pigeons who fancied the tops of the new library columns as nesting sites have been discouraged by spreading a caulk recommended by the university extension service. Apparently it gives them a sensation of hot feet.

WHAT'S NEW

Ames Public Library,
June, 1985 page 4.

TRAINING POST

A column of ideas, advice and practical suggestions for the practicing rural librarian .

WHAT IS A RARE BOOK

A short check list of information to use in determining if books are worth saving, weeding or selling.

DEFINITIONS:

- Rare - A title a dealer sees every ten years or so.
- Scarce - A title a dealer sees every year or so.
- Valuable/collectible - A title for which there is a proven demand.

PURPOSE: TO HELP

Below are some points to be aware of:

A book can be rare without being valuable. Think of the works of your favorite local poet. There are few copies but an extremely limited audience.

An old book is not necessarily a valuable book. Most people consider 1900 old for a book, often judging by paper discoloration and facility. The advent of cheap paper based on wood pulp starting in the 1860s allowed for a publishing boom. Many of the books published in the 1870-1920 era were not expected to last, either in their content or in form.

WHAT CHARACTERISTICS TO LOOK FOR:

CONDITION:

Collectors & dealers want copies in good condition. Spine labels, book pockets, library ownership stamps, accession number and other standard library marks Drastically reduce the value. As a rule of thumb, assume book dealers will pay virtually nothing for ex-library materials.

BINDING

Quality leather, calf or vellum bindings are collectible as are many boxed sets.

TOPICS

Local history, specific histories, local novelists, 1st editions of well-known authors - especially if the dust jacket is present.

While few dealers or collectors will pay much for old how-to and cookbooks, they do sell well.

PUBLISHERS: (Iowa Collectors)

Local and area presses, especially Torch Press from Cedar Rapids, Prairie Press from Muscatine, the many Iowa City Fine Presses and Arthur H. Clark Co. at Cleveland, OH and Glendale, CA. (Torch Press printed many of their early and highly collectible titles.) Some State Historical Society of Iowa publications but not their biographies (except for Black Hawk).

A high quality book published by an unusual press can often be an indication of value.

LIMITED EDITIONS:

Ignore this description. Most 20th century hard covers have only been published in 1000-5000 volumes. Compare this to mass market paperbacks.

FIRST EDITIONS:

Generally a first edition is more desirable than later editions, especially 20th century publications. An excellent guide for determining first editions is the book A First Edition available from Spoon River Press, P.O. Box 3635, Peoria, IL 61614.

ILLUSTRATIONS:

Books with lithographs, steel engravings & titles with illustrations by such artists as N.C. Wyeth, Howard Pyle, Rockwell, Dire. Frederick Remington, or Howard Chandler Christy are in demand. Most were published in the 1900-1945 era.

SILLY FICTION:

I refer to Mary Roberts Rinehart, Grace S. Richmond, G.A. Henty, Gene Stratton Porter, etc. who were published in the first third of this century by Grosset & Dunlap, A.L. Burt, Harpers, Donahoe and Century. Chances are your library has received hundreds of these. Antique dealers buy this stuff regularly if its in good condition, especially those with printed errors.

TEXTBOOKS:

Most textbooks over five years old are valueless, with the exception of pre-1870 science and medicine texts. McGuffey readers - all 100,000,000+ are worthless.

BIBLES/RELIGIOUS TRACTS:

The Bible is the most published title in the world. Only some pre-1700 are worth more than \$10.00.

Patrick Brunet is a librarian at University of Wisconsin - La Crosse, La Crosse, Wisconsin and a rare book collector. The above article was first published in Regional Rag, July-Aug '1985, Southeastern Iowa Regional Library.

Additional Note:

If you think you have a title that might be worth something check a used book price guide. One is Mildred S. Mandeville's Used Book Price Guide, 525 Kenmore Station, Kenmore, WA 98028.

It comes in 5 year cumulations, 1972, 1977, 1982.

+++++ **Beginning Begun in Oregon**

At the Oregon Library Association conference in Pendleton, April 10-14, 1985, a grassroots effort to organize a round table within OLA for small libraries, was activated. The genesis of the effort originated at last year's conference at Rippling River, when an informal gathering for staff from small libraries was advertised by posters. About 15 directors and other staff showed up and brainstormed on ways to continue communications between them. A petition was circulated to support programming for small libraries at the conferences. This petition was directed to the OLA Executive Board and Conference Committee along with a request for a scheduled meeting time at the April, 1985 con-

ference, which was approved. A round robin letter kept the information flow going during the 1984-85 year between conferences, and the formation of either a round table or section with OLA.

Also during the 84-85 year by-laws were drafted, a petition of support drawn up & a program proposed for the '85 State Conference. The Small Libraries Seminar on Friday, April 12th was intended to be a friendly session to meet the people in the Oregon library world who work in the itsy-bitsy, teensy-weensy, & small libraries which comprise much of the state, as well as present information on the varying definitions of "rural" & "small" which exist in this country, for the purpose of defining round table members. The allotted time period of one hour was much too short for the definition task, but the seventy librarians who attended provided wonderful introductions of their

small libraries following the format of filling in the sentence, "My library is so small that...." The petition for formation of a small libraries round table circulated & the audience demonstrated real interest & need in such a group.

If all goes well, this grassroots action could mean an official Small Libraries Round Table will soon exist within OLA to provide a framework for information sharing, continuing education, and moral support for library staff in small libraries.

The above is an adaption of a report by Mary Ginnane.

For Further Information Contact:
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More on Michigan Meeting

[Ed. note: This is the second report on the multitype rural library meeting held in Michigan in April, 1985. An earlier report was published in RLSN May, 1985 issue.]

In the final general session, some 206 librarians, trustees, & guests from 57 counties zeroed in on five topics of immediate concern for coalition study & a possible action agenda for the late 80's.

--Building personal professional esteem & community appreciation of librarianship as a profession.

--Development of a statewide continuing education & certification program which enables librarians to meet their professional training needs close to home at an affordable cost.

--A possible need for a Library of Michigan rural libraries staff specialist.

--Increased funding support for statewide interloan & 24 hour documents delivery to equalize access to information in all communities.

--A Need for the MLA to focus greater attention on rural library issues & to lobby for increase attention to them by the ALA.

Further highlighting the conference were presentations by Dr. Bernard Vavrek, Dr. Joseph Grunenwald, & Robert Case as "Team Rural" from the Center for the Study of Rural Librarianship, Clarion University of Pennsylvania; James W. Fry, State Librarian of Michigan, & 12 librarians who were "spotlighted" to extemporaneously tell the conference about their experiences in rural library service.

The conference was hosted by the Northern Libraries Caucus & sponsored with seed grants from various Michigan Library Association's entities such as the Educational Foundation, Trustee Division, School Division, Northern Libraries Caucus, Specialized Services Caucus and the following Library Cooperatives,

Northland, Lakeland, Superiorland, Macomb, White Pine, Mid-Peninsula, and Woodlands.

This Michigan Conference was organized by caucus chair & Northerland Cooperative Director Sue Williams of Hubbard Lake. Sue pins the success of the conference on "everyone's support & concern to see it fly because of their recognition that for too long Michigan's dedicated rural librarians and the outstanding, personalized library services they provide, have been kept a secret."



Bernard Vaverk (r) of the Center for the Study of Rural Librarianship, Clarion, PA, demonstrates his output measurers software package to Michigan Librarians.



Members of the Michigan Rural Conference Committee stand beneath a large button which reads "Spotlighting Rural Libraries".

ETC....

Under the series title Serving the Rural Adult, four publications have been developed by the Action Agenda Project. Collectively these publications offer rural educators valuable information on programs, adult learners, consultants & funding agencies.

Inventory of Model Programs in Rural Adult Post-secondary Education - Descriptions of 54 illustrative programs across the entire range of information about programs that work. Each entry lists the program goals & objectives, a brief description of how it operates & who it serves, innovative aspects, funding sources, resources available to exchange or share with other educators & who to contact for more info. Cost \$8.00

A Demographic Portrait of Rural Adult Learners - Data from the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) has been merged with augmentation studies at six rural sites. The result is a demographic portrait of the needs, characteristics, motivations & participation patterns of rural adult learners. Cost \$5.00.

Directory of Consultants for Rural Adult Education - Information on more than 80 experienced professionals offers a valuable resource to rural adult educators seeking advice on new programs. Individual entries include information on each consultant's past experiences in rural adult education, topics of expertise, availability, affordability & preferred styles of presentation. Cost \$7.00.

Private Funding Resources for Rural Adult Post-secondary Education - Profiles of 91 private foundations involved in rural adult postsecondary education provide rural educators quick access to possible funding agencies. Entries include the foundation name, address, contact person, brief statement of purpose & funding priorities, grant analysis information, preferred method of approach & fund restrictions. An annotated bibliography offers the novice useful information & advice on grant research & proposal preparation. Cost \$7.00

Complete set of all 4 publications is \$25.00.
Contact: Jacqueline Spears, Action Agenda Project
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