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Science-Technology Division

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News from the Science-Technology Division

Science-Technology Division — Joe Kraus, Chair

The objectives of the Science-Technology Division shall be to draw together those members of the Special Libraries Association having an interest in the role of library and information science as applied to the recording, retrieval and dissemination of knowledge and information in all areas of science and technology, and to promote and improve the communication, dissemination and use of such knowledge for the benefit of libraries and their users.'

Hello from snowy Colorado! I am having a pretty good winter, and I hope you are doing okay as well. I will start off this report with some notes from the 2011 Leadership Summit in Washington, DC. If you would like to see the slides that were used for the presentations, they are available to members at: http://www.sla.org/content/resources/leadcenter/LeadershipSummit/11leadsummit/handouts.cfm.

One of the sessions at the Summit was led by Daniel Lee. He spoke on "SLA's New WordPress Web Hosting for Units." He has been trying to get many divisions, chapters and other units to convert their websites to WordPress for a number of good reasons. Our Division Webmaster, Margaret Smith, has been working with Daniel Lee and WordPress software for some time so that we can have a website that is more flexible, allows for multiple authors and contributors to provide content, and accepts social widgets so we can display RSS feeds, our Twitter feed, images, and more. By the time you read this, the new Website should be ready for public display at: http://scitech.sla.org/.

The Sci-Tech Division website is important as a vehicle for us to provide and exchange information with our members and the general public, so we want it to have a cohesive design and to be as functional as possible. Please let me or Margaret Smith know if you find content on the website that needs to be modified.

We also had a board meeting at the Summit. We were able to address some of the questions I had concerning the 2011 SLA Conference in Philadelphia. Speaking of the conference, you can find our draft schedule on the SLA Wiki.

http://wiki.sla.org/display/SLASCITECH/2011+Sci-Tech+Annual+Conference+Planning

If you are a new member or are a first-time attendee of the SLA Conference, we invite you to attend our Newcomer's Lunch as our guest on Sunday morning from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. If you live a good distance away from Philadelphia, please consider flying into town on Saturday evening so that you can attend the lunch on Sunday.

Registration is now open for the conference at: http://www.sla.org/content/Events/conference/ac2011/index.cfm.

I am really looking forward to spring and summer, and I hope to see many of you in Philadelphia. ❖

Joe Kraus
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In Remembrance of Diane K. Foster

Submitted by Joe Kraus, Chair, Sci-Tech Division

Diane K. Foster passed away on Tuesday, January 25th, 2011 following a brief respiratory illness. She was the current Chair of the Sci-Tech Division Public Relations Committee in which she served with enthusiasm and intelligence. Please visit this webpage that Florida State University librarians made in her memory:

http://guides.lib.fsu.edu/diane

The Sci-Tech Division will be donating $100 to the Turner Syndrome Foundation in her honor, and we are considering other ways to remember her service to SLA and the Sci-Tech Division. For more information about Diane, please visit http://www.legacy.com/obituaries/tallahassee/obituary.aspx?n=diane-foster&pid=148107803 or http://bit.ly/gkvJtp.

She was loved dearly by her family, friends and colleagues and will be sorely missed. ❖

Science-Technology Division New Members

Submitted by Sarah Oelker, Membership Committee Chair, Science-Technology Division

The Science-Technology Division welcomes its new members:

Julie Hillskemper
Albuquerque, NM
USA

I. R. Palmer
Santa Monica, CA
USA

Christine Simon
Woodbury, MN
USA

Erin Carrillo
Carrboro, NC
USA

Jacquelyn Erdman
Arlington, VA
USA

Rebecca Gallei
Fresh Meadows, NY
USA

Elizabeth Rinz
University Heights, OH
USA

Sci-Tech Division Vendor Sponsors for 2011

Carol Lucke, Vendor Relations Chair, Sci-Tech Division

The Sci-Tech Division would like to recognize our generous sponsor vendors for their financial assistance and support for the 2011 SLA Conference. Without them the Sci-Tech Division would not be able to offer the relevant, educational and interesting programs and networking opportunities our members count on and expect. This year our vendor supporters include, in alphabetical order:

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Science-Technology Division Member Spotlight

by Diane Foster, Chair, Public Relations Committee

Featured Member:

Roger Beckman

Tell us a little bit about your current position.

My current position is Head of the Indiana University Chemistry Library and Life Sciences Library on the Bloomington campus. I've been in charge of these two libraries since 2004. I became Head of the Life Sciences Library in 2000 and worked in the Chemistry Library in various positions beginning in 1988. Most of my time is spent on collection development, management, reference, schmoozing with faculty, attending some of the faculty members' public lectures, and some instruction.

What do you find most interesting about your work?

Getting the books and journals the students and researchers need, helping users navigate the bureaucracy of a large library, seeing the excitement of users when we show them all of our resources they were unaware of, and working with library science students (I have one intern each year) and seeing them find jobs.

What do you think is the most interesting issue in librarianship today?

There are so many right now. One on my mind right now is the perils and benefits of moving to large e-book packages instead of selecting titles individually. Will that mean that our users will come to our physical space even less often for their information needs? What kinds of roles should librarians play in managing data for researchers? With Google scanning the world's books and providing "indexing" that many students and faculty turn to first, what will the future of the librarian be in ten years?

What advice would you give a new member of SLA, new librarian, or someone starting out in science librarianship?

Marry a librarian who gives you good advice and support! Maybe everyone can't do that but having a good mentor or working with someone in an apprenticeship-type arrangement is useful too. All of those things worked for me. I think it is also important to broaden yourself in various science areas either through classes or reading. Explore new technology as much as possible but don't lose sight of the fundamentals of the profession. Joining and volunteering at all levels of the university and in library organizations opens so many doors. Don't burn your bridges. I've been tempted to burn a few in the past but sometimes that person turns around and is a big help a few years down the road.

What other organizations are you involved in?

SLA Sci-Tech Division is my main organization with some involvement with the Chemistry and Biomedical Divisions. I'm somewhat involved in the ACS Division of Chemical Information (CINF), Royal Society of Chemistry, and even the Indiana Native Plant Society.

What was your background before you became a science librarian?

I started out as a bricklayer and was an anthropology major as an undergraduate who took a few science classes too. After library school, I was a cataloger of Latin American materials at the Lilly Library (the rare book library at Indiana University), Head of the IU Optometry Library, consultant to the libraries at the University of Indonesia for a year, general reference librarian at IU, and cataloger on the Indiana Newspaper Project.

What Has Been Your Biggest Professional Challenge?

Shyness has always plagued me. My frugality is another challenge and it is always an annoyance that many of us have to provide so much of our own funding to attend conferences and meetings. But probably my biggest challenge is trying to find ways to continue to provide the best resources, instruction, and services to

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our users in a library system that has reduced our staff so much recently in favor of librarian positions working with data and institutional repositories.

What are some of your interests outside of librarianship?

I still do a little brickwork from time to time. It was so much fun recently to help my neighbor who is a professor add four feet to his chimney so his fireplace would draw better. I don't get many opportunities to boss professors around. Furniture building is a passion although I don't produce many pieces. Then there is sitting in front of the fireplace, bird watching, and a little "flower" gardening, especially with daffodils and ferns (grown from spores). ❖

Table made by Roger Beckman.