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## From the Editor

Bonnie Osif

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## From the Editor

Bonnie Osif

Happy 2004! We embark on another year of news, issues, trends, and opinions that concern the wide range of science and technology subjects of our libraries. This is my last year as editor and I have some ideas I would like to explore in these last issues. I've already approached some of you to help me with articles. Rest assured, many more of you will be hearing from me! If you have any ideas you would like to pursue, let me know. I'm always open to ideas.

One of the benefits of my job at Penn State and of the task of being *STN* editor is getting to travel and meet wonderful people. I recently returned from the Transportation Research Board's annual meeting in Washington, D.C. I would like to make several observations based on the many days of meetings, sessions, and conversations.

First, it is very clear that the value of information is becoming a very important issue—and not just for librarians. It is interesting to attend sessions that note the need for efficient access to quality information. It is also worth noting that archival and preservation issues are being voiced by engineers and policy makers. Information on all types in transportation is needed, yet there has not been enough time, attention, or money to address this problem adequately. Now, it is becoming a major issue.

In addition, many people have retired or are considering retirement. With these people will go a wealth of information. In some cases, this information is in books and files. These are areas that the information profession is expert in addressing. As long as there is a mechanism in place and the support to maintain these collections, the knowledge can be saved and preserved. However, with the people goes a vast store of knowledge that is not on paper. The loss of this resource is staggering. A number of knowledge and information management projects are under way to address this problem. I hope to have an article soon that will discuss some of these projects. At a program at the conference, a number of people, most of whom were not information professionals, came to hear what can be done—one more indication that our interests are becoming important to nonlibrarians.

Another aspect of the conference made an enormous impression on me, perhaps due to my being part of the "graying" of the profession (and I mean that literally as well as figuratively!). I had

the opportunity to work with some of the newer members of our group as well as some of the more senior. The cooperation, collegiality, and sincere desire to share and support each other are so encouraging. I've written on cooperation and competition for another publication. I have seen some really negative examples of nonsupport, non-encouragement, and—well, to be honest—competitive nastiness in my career. While these examples are the exception, often it seems people are perfectly willing to ignore others in the quest for self-promotion and personal credit. I was heartened by the positive support and sincere interest that I saw at TRB. It is a carryover from much that I see at the SLA meetings. I believe we have an enormously positive atmosphere in the divisions I know, and it gives me great hope for the future of our profession. It is my personal belief that this support, collegiality, and belief in each other are crucial to our overall success. It is great to see it in action.

So, now that I'm off my soapbox, what do we have for you this issue? The featured division is the Chemistry Division and we have so many interesting articles it was hard to fit them all in one issue! I would like to thank Marilyn Dunker for her hard work in finding the authors for the papers. I know very well how hard it can be to find people willing to write for *STN*, yet Marilyn found so many!

The articles range from a list of the more important resources in chemistry, to a look at recruitment, informatics, property data index, a library profile, and more. Even if you aren't a chemistry librarian, I believe you will learn a great deal that you can apply in your library, as well as learn about a subject that is the basis of our physical world. I was a chemistry librarian for two years and taught chemistry at a small college for eight. While physics (also something I taught in a prior career) is fun, chemistry is cool, so give these articles a look.

Again, my columnists have come through with interesting and informative columns. Please note the award information for several divisions and the call for a new editor. We would like to have someone in line by June so we can meet and begin the transition. It is a wonderful opportunity. Take some time and consider it. Call me or e-mail if you would like additional information.

Till next issue,  
Bonnie