



Editor's Keyboard

Marta Mestrovic Deyrup

This is my final column for *LA&M*. It has been a wonderful two years serving as your editor. Gregg and I have tried hard to listen to what you, the membership, wanted from the journal. You asked for issues that focused in depth on a particular subject, and for articles that had more relevance to our organization's younger members. We responded with thematic issues devoted to fund-raising; core competencies and the role of the professional librarian; and generational differences among library managers; as well as with articles that looked at the specific needs of librarians who are just beginning their managerial careers.

One of my most exciting moments as editor was when members circulated among themselves Pixey Anne Mosley's article, "Mentoring Gen-X Managers: Tomorrow's Leadership is Already Here," and it became the topic of intense debate at the Dialog with Directors Discussion Group at Annual Conference. Talk about the ultimate thrill for an editor! Another real professional satisfaction has been watching the ChangeMasters series, begun by Pat Weaver-Meyers, take on a life of its own. These interviews, as well as several others that have been commissioned, will be published as a book next year—just in time for LAMA's fiftieth birthday celebration. Among other things, the ChangeMasters series documents the rise of women into the upper levels of library management and the struggles they had to go through to establish their careers. What shines through in these biographies is the ability of our profession to adapt to societal change. Librarianship is very different than many other career paths, in part because the profession has been so willing to do so. Reading about the lives of these remarkable individuals makes me highly skeptical of assertions that librarians are risk-averse, or that they somehow are unwilling or unable to respond in a creative, innovative way to change.

One of the high points of being editor has been watching how members have claimed *LA&M* as their own. This year, Howard Carter, who chairs the Research Interest Group, started an award for articles that appear in *LA&M* that exhibit a high level of scholarship. The first recipients were Jeffrey A. Lackney and Paul Zajfen for their article, "Post-Occupancy Evaluation of Public Libraries: Lessons Learned from Three Case Studies" (Winter 2005) and Karen Brown and Kate Marek for "Librarianship and

Change: A Consideration of Weick's 'Drop Your Tools' Metaphor" (Spring 2005). Janice Simmons-Welburn took on the role of guest editor of the 2006 Winter issue precisely because it was important to her to address our membership in this particular forum. In a similar vein, a LAMA member suggested that the journal run an article on how hurricanes Rita and Katrina affected library management in Louisiana. We agreed that this was a terrific idea. Marilyn Wilt, who serves on the *LA&M* editorial board, worked with the author, Tom Diamond, to produce a record of how academic library directors responded during this national tragedy.

In editing the journal I was repeatedly struck by the number of directors, department heads, and other high-level library administrators who were eager to write for *LA&M*. The LAMA membership is their natural audience, and these writers had a great deal to say—some of which was quite provocative—to their peers about issues that mattered to them. The ultimate test of a good journal is whether it can foster a conversation that goes beyond the printed page. I hope that *LA&M* has provided a venue for you to be able to do just that.

This issue of *LA&M* has four excellent articles. I have already referred to Tom Diamond's piece, "The Impact of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita on Three Louisiana Academic Libraries: A Response from Library Administrators and Staff." One of the most fascinating aspects of this story is how rather simple technology—cell phones, text-messaging, and the Web—was able to keep libraries up and running in the aftermath of these disasters. "Where Does the Time Go? The Staff Allocations Project" is, according to the authors, "the first library-wide comparative study in the United States in which the same methodology was used to gather data on staff time and costs." This significant analysis of activity-based costing at Notre Dame and Vanderbilt university libraries should stimulate much discussion. Lastly, the journal contains excellent interviews with Meredith Butler, recently retired dean and director of the State University of New York (SUNY) Albany Libraries, and Merrily E. Taylor, university librarian at Washington and Lee. Taylor took the unusual step of resigning from Brown University to become head of a much smaller institution,

continued on next page

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President's Column *continued from page 166*

other notification when the new issue of *LA&M* is available on the Web. We will also begin mounting back issues on the site later this year.

I hope that you too believe how fortunate you are to be part of LAMA and able to share in the excitement of this cel-

ebratory year. I am proud and fortunate to be able to serve you as the fiftieth president.

Editor's Keyboard *continued from page 167*

and she documents the similarities and differences between the two positions.

As I have done in most issues, I urge you to contact the authors, get involved, and speak your mind. Many of the articles in *LA&M* had their beginning as conference

or preconference presentations. The reverse is also true. Articles that have appeared in *LA&M* have become books, formed the basis of later presentations, and have led to successful collaborative projects. All part of the ongoing conversation!