77TH ASIS&T ANNUAL MEETING

Connecting Collections, Cultures and Communities

The 77th ASIS&T Annual Meeting is within sight, and the Association will continue its celebration of its recently reaffirmed commitment to an international focus. The conference committee for this year’s gathering is hard at work reviewing the hundreds of submissions it received. By the middle of June, the committee will have selected the papers, panels, workshops and tutorials that will fill the five to seven dozen available pre-conference and technical schedule slots. Within the broad theme of Connecting Collections, Cultures and Communities, the committee will seek the greatest variety among topics that share innovations, ideas, research and insight into the state and future of information and communication.

The 2014 ASIS&T Annual Meeting will be held in Seattle, Washington, October 31-November 4, at the Sheraton Seattle Hotel.

One activity already underway is the solicitation of items for donation to the ASIS&T SIG/III silent auction. As part of its International Reception, the SIG sponsors the silent auction to raise funds for the SIG/III InfoShare project which awards one-year memberships to information professionals in developing countries. For the first time, the SIG will showcase auction items on the SIG/III website in advance of the Annual Meeting. To donate an item, please visit http://goo.gl/vHFCgf to provide a description and image of your items. For more information, contact Catherine Dumas at asistsigiiiiauction<at>gmail.com.

ASIS&T to Create New Web Presence

Have you visited the ASIS&T website lately? If so, you have seen a new home page that just tickles the edges of what ASIS&T plans to offer later this year.

Proposals are in hand from website designers interested in helping ASIS&T create a web presence and associated infrastructure that will provide an informative, interactive, engaging, and maintainable presence for ASIS&T members and prospective members for the rest of this decade. The Association issued its call for proposals in early April inviting any experienced designers to come forward with their thoughts and insights. The ASIS&T Web Presence Task Force, chaired by ASIS&T director Diane Rasmussen Pennington, will now review the proposals based on prior experience of the principals, references and qualifications, understanding of the work involved and price.

Constitutional Amendment Passes

ASIS&T members voted overwhelmingly in favor of the amendment to the ASIS&T Constitution reducing the number of days that must be allowed between distribution of electronic ballots to the membership and members’ return of executed ballots. This change makes the constitution symmetrical with the bylaws which were previously amended.

Inside ASIS&T
José-Marie Griffiths, former ASIS&T president and vice president for academic affairs, Bryant University, spoke on The Spider and the Web: Can the Information Age Survive Another 25 Years?, at the annual networking dinner of the New England Chapter of ASIS&T. In her speech, she explored some of the trends that are straining the interwoven strands of the information universe, from net governance and neutrality to data policy and stewardship to individual privacy.

Also at NEASIS&T, the chapter presented its 2014 Student Travel Award to Regina Pagani, student in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at Simmons College, for her essay addressing why she wants to attend the 2014 ASIS&T Annual Meeting and how she believes it might further her education and career. Regina will receive up to $750 to help defray costs of attendance at the Annual Meeting in Seattle.

Gerry Benoit, acquisitions editor for the ASIS&T monograph series, invites ASIS&T members to consider participating in the program by submitting proposals for individual authored texts, collaborative texts or works by newer scholars from around the world. Peer review volunteers will join Gerry in reviewing all proposals and replying in a timely fashion. Proposals for monographs do not require completed manuscripts. For help in shaping ideas into proposals and for more information about the monograph program, visit the ASIS&T Monograph Series Information Site at http://web.simmons.edu/~benoit/asist/index.html.

Information Today, Inc., manages the ASIS&T monograph program for the Association.
SIG/III Announces InfoShare Award Winners

Special Interest Group/International Information Issues (SIG/III) have announced the winners of the InfoShare Awards for 2014. Information professionals from developing countries, where the cost of ASIS&T membership would be a burden, are eligible to receive one year of membership. SIG/III officers vote on a roster of candidates nominated by ASIS&T colleagues or others. These memberships are funded by monies raised at the International Reception during the ASIS&T Annual Meeting. The success of the 2013 reception in Montreal allowed the SIG to offer memberships to four professional candidates and three student candidates:

Professionals
Abdullahi Bege, Nigeria
Emilian Bribena, Nigeria
Irakli Garibashvili, Georgia
Projes Roy, India

Students
Guleda Dogan, Turkey
Purity Mwagha, Kenya
Zehra Taskin, Turkey

For more information about the InfoShare program, please visit the SIG/III website: www.asis.org/SIG/SIGIII/

In Memoriam

Gretchen Whitney, longtime ASIS&T member and retired associate professor at University of Tennessee-Knoxville School of Information Sciences, passed away suddenly in early April. She earned both bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, and her doctorate in library science from the University of Michigan. Gretchen is best known for creating the JESSE listserv in 1994, which was the leading discussion group for library and information sciences educators for more than a decade.

Within ASIS&T, Gretchen served on the Board of Directors and in the SIG Cabinet and was a presenter at numerous ASIS&T Annual and Mid-Year Meetings. She also established and managed the email list for SIG/Metrics.

Gretchen taught courses in information environment, Web design and content representation from 1994 until her retirement from the University of Tennessee in Oct. 2009. Prior to coming to UT, she was on the faculty at the University of Arizona. She also worked in special libraries and the information industry.

According to her personal website, Gretchen had branched out from her scholarly pursuits and completed a novel that was to be released this spring.

Gretchen is survived by her sister Kay Whitney Fagundus of Winterville, NC.
In Memoriam

Allen Kent

Allen Kent, a true pioneer in the field of information science, passed away on May 1 at the age of 92. Winner of the 1977 ASIS&T Award of Merit, Kent helped change the world through his pioneering work in computer technology and the development of a system that anticipated the Internet search engine.

Born in Harlem, New York, in 1921, Kent was the son of a tailor. He studied chemistry at City College of New York before serving in the U.S. Air Force during World War II. Following the war, he became an editor of technical manuscripts, which led to a legendary career in information science. Enlisted to participate in a classified project at MIT, he helped develop a system for mechanically encoding key words to help find specific bits of information within large documents, the precursor of today’s Internet search engines. At Western Reserve University, he helped establish the first academic program in the field of mechanized information retrieval, first using cards, then utilizing new reel-to-reel tape technology.

Kent’s 1959 article for Harper’s Magazine, “A Machine That Does Research,” was among the first pieces in the national popular press explaining to Americans how their lives would soon be changed by electronic information technology. In 1963, he founded and became director of the Knowledge Availability Systems Center at the University of Pittsburgh. He was also chair of the interdisciplinary department of information science and head of communications programs. Early in his Pitt tenure, he served as an advisor to the Kennedy White House regarding the creation of a National Information Storage and Retrieval Network. A prolific writer and editor, Kent wrote the Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science, the Encyclopedia of Computer Science and Technology, and the Encyclopedia of Microcomputers.

In addition to this Award of Merit, Kent also won the 1979 ASIS&T award for best book with his co-author Thomas Galvin for The Structure and Governance of Library Networks. If desired, memorial contributions may be made to the Allen Kent Scholarship at Pitt. For more information, contact Marci Carothers (mbc20@pitt.edu).